

C. H. Hoole, L.T.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM

AN ANTHOLOGY

UC-NRLF



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*from
The Editor*

1915.



Aug. 1915.

to

Dr. Code

With the love and good wishes
of his friend the author,

Russell Markland

To bring
"good luck"

to
"The Scriptorium".

The Profits on this volume will be
devoted to
THE BELGIAN REPATRIATION FUND.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM

A TRIBUTE AND A CHRONICLE

COLLATED AND EDITED

BY

RUSSELL MARKLAND

(" R. M. Ingersley.")

With a Preface by

EMILE CAMMAERTS

LONDON, MCMXV.

ERSKINE MACDONALD

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CONTENTS.

FOREWORD	<i>The Editor</i>	11
PREFACE	<i>Emile Cammaerts</i>	13
PRAYER BEFORE WAR ...	<i>W. G. Hole</i>	17

PART I.—Since the Great War, August, 1914.

TO THE BELGIANS	<i>Laurence Binyon</i>	19
ENGLAND TO BELGIUM... ..	<i>John Drinkwater</i>	21
TO ALBERT, KING OF THE BELGIANS	<i>Wilson Benington</i>	22
A SALUTE TO THE BELGIAN FLAG	<i>Alfred Perceval Graves</i>	23
THE HAPPY WARRIOR	<i>Wilfrid Blair</i>	24
TO KING ALBERT OF THE BELGIANS	<i>John R. Palmer</i>	25
TO "LITTLE" BELGIUM	<i>Coulson Kernahan</i>	26
THE STRICKEN PEOPLE	<i>Cecil Roberts</i>	27
THE WIFE OF FLANDERS	<i>G. K. Chesterton</i>	29
THE CRUCIFIED RACES... ..	<i>F. W. Orde Ward</i>	30
BELGIUM	<i>Cecil Roberts</i>	31
A LITTLE PEOPLE	<i>Violet Gillespie</i>	32
GLORIOUS BELGIUM	<i>F. W. Orde Ward</i>	33
BELGIUM	<i>H. D. Rawnsley</i>	34
BELGIUM THE BARLASS	<i>A. Mary F. Robinson</i>	35
THE KAISER AND BELGIUM	<i>Stephen Phillips</i>	36
THE ANSWER	<i>Phyllis Marks</i>	36
THE BELGIC GATE	<i>Wm. Madden</i>	37
TO BELGIUM	<i>Anthony Kirby Gill</i>	40
TO BELGIUM	<i>H. W. Bliss</i>	40
A LAMENTATION OVER BELGIUM	<i>F. W. Bourdillon</i>	41
BELGIUM	<i>Marion Couthouy Smith</i>	45

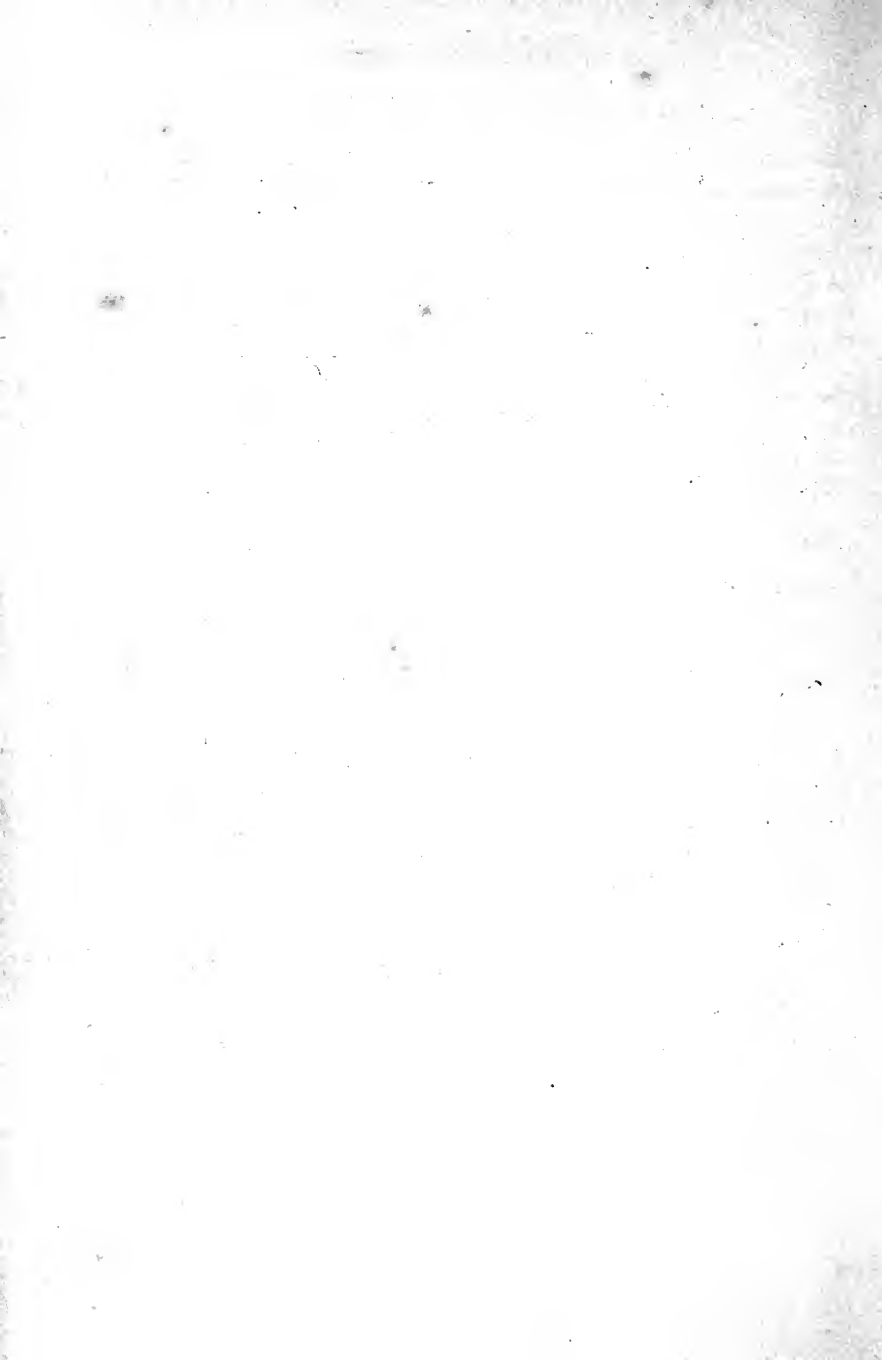
THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

BELGIUM	F. W. Orde Ward	46
DESOLATE	Jeanie Donnan	47
WHAT MATTERS IT?	Bertha Baily	48
TO BELGIUM	Harold Lilley	48
TO M. MAETERLINCK	Wilfrid Blair	49
BRAVE BELGIUM	David W. Greaves	50
CRUCIFIED BELGIUM	H. D. Rawnsley	51
THE SECOND CRUCIFIXION	F. W. Orde Ward	52
CRY OF THE BELGIAN CHILDREN	A. R. Hamilton	54
TO THE MOON	Hubert Dayne	55
A GRAVE IN FLANDERS	The Marquess of Crewe	56
A REQUIEM	W. J. Courthope	57
SEED	Wilfrid Blair	58
TO BELGIUM	William Akerman	61
TO GENERAL LEMAN	John R. Palmer	62
LIÈGE	R. M. Ingersley	63
THE TAKING OF THE GUNS AT MONS	Henri M. Léon	64
LOUVAIN	Laurence Binyon	65
LOUVAIN	William Archer	66
THE SACK OF LOUVAIN	Henry Birkhead	67
LOUVAIN	D. Pitkethly Saunders	68
MARIE OF LOUVAIN	Habberton Lulham	69
TO QUENTIN MATSYS	R. M. Ingersley	70
TERMONDE	William Watson	71
THE FALL OF ANTWERP	W. G. Hole	71
A NONCOMBATANT	R. K. Risk	72
YPRES	Florence Clee	73
THE LILIES AND THE ROSE	Norman W. Sibley	74
THE IRON SWALLOW IN FLANDERS	F. W. Orde Ward	76
THE BELGIAN WAR DOG	F. W. Orde Ward	78
A HYMN OF PRAYER IN WAR TIME... ..	S. Gertrude Ford	79
PEACE	Frederick Langbridge	80

CONTENTS.

PART II.—Before the Great War.

LA BRABANÇONNE	<i>Percy Addleshaw</i>	81
SIR HUGH AND THE SWANS ...	<i>A. Mary F. Robinson</i> . . .	83
CAPTAIN ORTIS' BOOTY ...	<i>A. Mary F. Robinson</i> . . .	86
THE SCENERY OF FLANDERS ...	<i>J. Redwood-Anderson</i> . . .	89
A PAGEANT AT FURNES ...	<i>J. Redwood-Anderson</i> . . .	93
THE SCHELDE	<i>J. Redwood-Anderson</i> . . .	97
NEAR BRUSSELS—A HALF-WAY PAUSE	<i>D. G. Rossetti (1828-82)</i> . . .	99
ANTWERP TO GHENT	<i>D. G. Rossetti (1828-82)</i> . . .	100
ANTWERP AND BRUGES ...	<i>D. G. Rossetti (1828-82)</i> . . .	101
ON LEAVING BRUGES	<i>D. G. Rossetti (1828-82)</i> . . .	102
HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS	<i>Robert Browning (1812-89)</i> . . .	103
THE LAY OF THE BRAVE CAMERON	<i>J. S. Blackie (1809-95)</i> . . .	106
THE BELFRY OF BRUGES ...	<i>H. W. Longfellow (1807-82)</i> . .	108
THE EMPEROR'S GLOVE ...	<i>H. W. Longfellow (1807-82)</i> . .	113
DAYBREAK FROM THE STEEPLE	<i>Sir Henry Taylor (1800-86)</i> . .	114
THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO ...	<i>Lord Byron (1788-1824)</i> . . .	115
LINES FROM "THE FIELD OF WATERLOO"	<i>Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832)</i> . .	118
WATERLOO	<i>W. Wordsworth (1770-1850)</i> . .	123
ON THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO...	<i>John Jones (1774 — ?)</i> . . .	124
OSTEND	<i>W. L. Bowles (1762-1850)</i> . .	125
ODE TO A LADY	<i>William Collins (1721-59)</i> . .	126
LINES FROM "WAR IN FLANDERS"	<i>William Broome (1689-1745)</i> . .	128
LINES FROM "THE TAKING OF NAMUR"	<i>Matthew Prior (1664-1721)</i> . .	131
TO VANDYCK	<i>Edmund Waller (1606-87)</i> . .	132
THE PAINTER AND THE BEE ...	<i>Charles F. Ellerman (1809-63?)</i> .	134
THE LION OF FLANDERS ...	<i>Sir Henry Taylor (1800-86)</i> . .	136



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THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

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R. M.

FOREWORD.

Though Belgium cannot claim to have influenced our English literature to nearly the same extent as have many other European countries, yet the two nations have mostly lived in a close fellowship and some of our poets have sung of that noble plot of land which became the Kingdom of Belgium in 1830. That part of the old province of Flanders now forming a portion of Belgium claims a fair share of these poetical tributes, and seems often to have been visited by English armies, for the most part friendly, since Van Artevelde sought the aid of Edward III. against French influence.

Belgium has now earned the undying gratitude and admiration of our country and her Allies, and it is therefore hoped this small selection of poems may not be without a unique interest to all lovers of poetry, for there has of late been a large addition from which to choose made to our English verse bearing one way or another on Belgium—a revival, on an even greater scale, of the outpourings of poets when inspired by the great events culminating in Waterloo.

The sack of Louvain has aroused English feeling perhaps as much as any event of the war, and formed the theme of some fine poems; it is therefore interesting to remember that the old town and University of Louvain, once among the most important centres of learning in Europe, drew numbers of English scholars to Belgium, among them being Sir Thomas More, who wrote an account of his visit there while on a mission to Flanders in 1516. Much earlier than this, however, Chaucer, "father of English poetry," had visited Flanders, and mentions it in his works. For instance, in the *Prologue to The Canterbury Tales* it is recorded that the "Squier"

"had been somtyme in chivachye
In Flaundres."*

Chaucer also writes to the credit of the "Wife of Bath" that

*"Of clooth-making she hadde swiche an haunt,
She passed hem of Ypres and of Gaunt."*

This reference to Ypres, once the capital of French Flanders, is noteworthy in the light of the undying events enacted there of late.

Again, it is known that Oliver Goldsmith, in his wanderings, "made some stay at Louvain, became acquainted with its professors, and informed himself of its modes of study." Such a character would naturally be attracted to the old University town.

Thus it will be seen there has often been a connecting link between the literati of Belgium and Britain, and of late years this

* Chivachye—a military expedition.

link has been much strengthened by the writings of M. Maeterlinck, M. Emile Cammaerts, and others.

There has been no attempt in this little volume to make an extensive collection of poems written since war broke out, dealing with Belgium, many of them unavailable for reasons of copyright. Incidentally, no poems from *King Albert's Book* are included, for they in themselves form a garland to lay at the feet of the King of the Belgians. But there is here gathered together a small but representative selection of living writers, finely expressing the gratitude and sympathy of this nation towards Belgium, and the poems chosen from a number by the older poets, or verses written in later times, yet before war was declared, have now an especial interest, whether they are filled with the spirit of "that world's-earthquake, Waterloo," the more peaceful aspect of characteristic scenery and legendary lore, or earlier events that happened within the borders of Belgium in the past, for instance the lines by William Broome, which form an interesting comparison between the horrors of warfare in 1710 and those of such great modern battles as Ypres and Neuve Chapelle. For once again we are fighting on the soil of Belgium and by her side, in the greatest of causes, proving the truth expressed in Miss Cicely Fox Smith's lines :—

"To-day, as when the musket rattle
O'er Belgian lowlands spoke,
And 'mid the rush and roar of battle
The famed Grand Army broke,
Should the dense storm-cloud, dark with omen
Fling forth its freight of war,
Gladly against the marshalled foemen
Would Britons march once more."

R. M.

PREFACE.

THE BELGIAN REPATRIATION FUND.

BY EMILE CAMMAERTS.

In devoting the proceeds of this book of Poems to the Belgian Repatriation Fund, Mr. Russell Markland has had a very happy idea. There is no process which should be more pleasant to writers—especially to poets—under the present circumstances, than the converting of printed paper into some useful and substantial means of helping the people who have been ruined by the war.

The French expression *feuille de papier* is full of rich associations in this way. It evokes poplar leaves, spreading their light shade on the restored fields, cabbage leaves in the midday soup, or even tobacco leaves in the farmer's pipe. The English word only suggests sheets and blankets for the beds, which will, no doubt, be also badly wanted in many Flemish households presently.

Before pursuing further this comparative study of the various images suggested by book pages, it would be useful, I suppose, to give a few explanations concerning the efforts made by the committee of the Belgian Repatriation Fund.

The main idea is to help the Belgian workers of any part of the country, when it has been set free from the enemy, to start work at once, without waiting for the intervention of the Belgian Government. In spite of the name of the Fund, which is somewhat misleading, this help should not be limited to the refugees in this country, but should be extended to those who, remaining behind the German lines, have been ruined by the war.

It goes without saying that private enterprise cannot undertake the rebuilding of Belgian towns and cottages, still less the restoration of means of communication,

roads, bridges, or railways. The latter will necessarily be done by the army engineers as the Allies' lines progress towards the East. The former will be accomplished by the Belgian Government as soon as the tremendous business of war—which must necessarily be its first preoccupation—allows it to direct part of its activity in this direction.

How, then, is the action of the committee of the Repatriation Fund to exert itself? It is one thing to rebuild ruined towns, it is another to provide the population with temporary shelters in which they may live for a few months, even for a year, until the work of restoration is finished. It is one thing to build railways and bridges, it is another to provide the workmen with the means of pursuing their occupation and, as we are dealing mostly with peasants, to give them or to lend them the cattle, the seed, and the tools without which they would be obliged to remain out of work.

Between the first retreat of the German front in the west and the definite settlement of the war some months will certainly elapse. Shall the Belgian people have to wait until their Government is able to help them or until the war indemnity gives them the means to rebuild their country? This is the gap which private initiative might fill most efficiently. As far as the refugees are concerned, such activity stands to reason. Many committees are spending weekly hundreds of pounds to house and to feed Belgian peasants in England. Would it not be better to spend this money, as soon as the opportunity arises, to help them to go back to their villages and to start work at once?

Of course, there is one objection, and I am sure that it is already in the mind of the reader. Are we not presuming too much? Is not such a plan somewhat premature? The "great advance" so much spoken of has not even been accomplished. As far as Belgium is concerned, the country is reduced to a narrow stretch

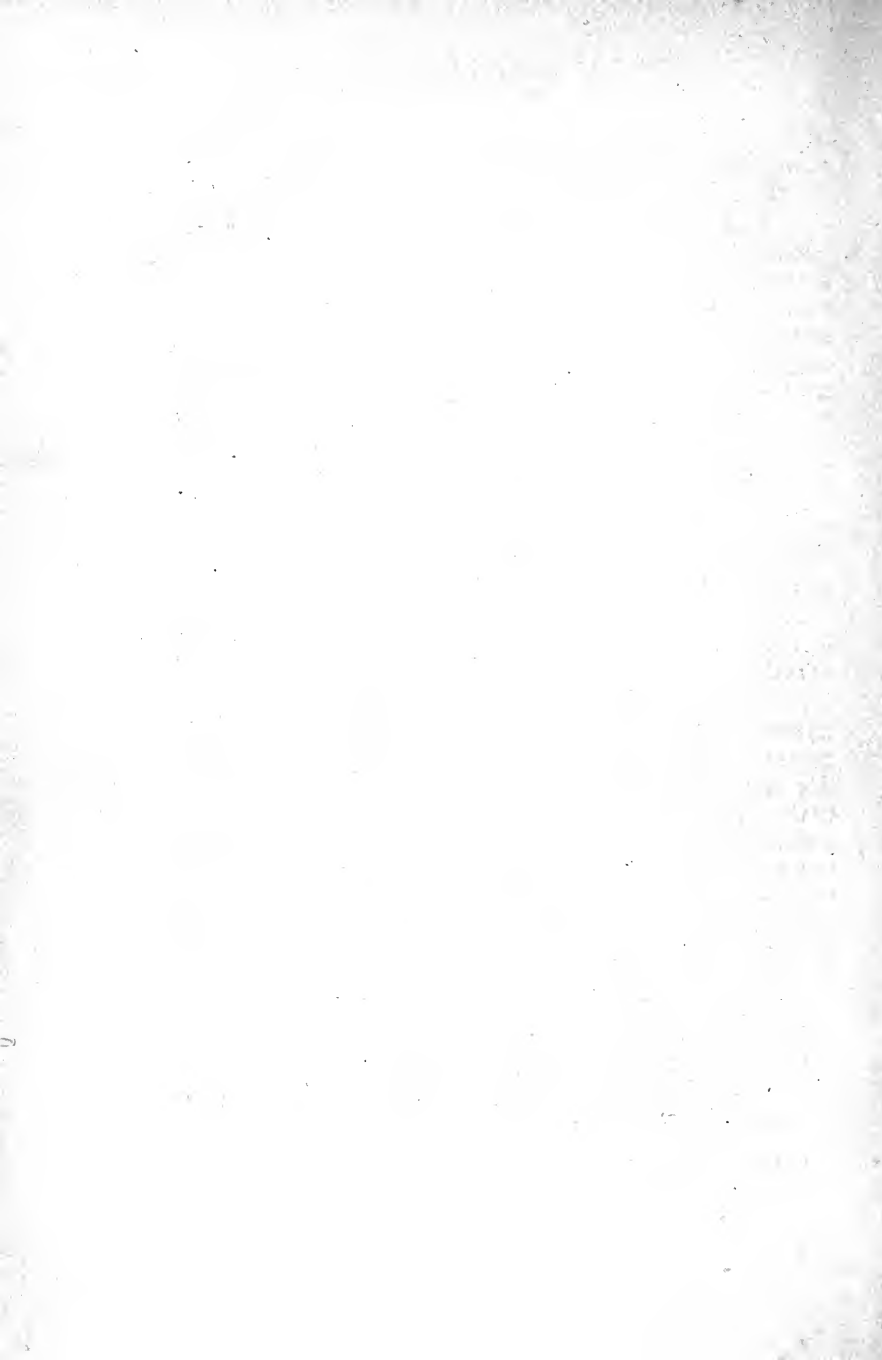
of territory exposed everywhere to the firing of the German guns. Ought we not to wait before bringing such optimistic plans before the public ?

It must be explained that the movement for Belgian Repatriation was started before the fall of Antwerp, at a time when Flanders was still free from the German occupation and when an early retreat of the German lines was expected. Under present circumstances, it ought not to divert public attention from more urgent calls, especially from those which provide the army with the " comforts " which are so badly needed at the front and are helping to equip adequately the Belgian Red Cross. But there is no reason why the different committees concerned should not already bring the matter before the public and organise the work. When the time comes—and it will perhaps come before many of us expect it—it will come suddenly.

Let us be prepared. If we have not yet all the money in hand, let us know where we can find it, let us know exactly what we have to do and how to do it.

Such is the modest claim of the Repatriation Committee at the present moment. When the good news comes, it will be much more urgent, much more eloquent. We will need then all the unfailing generosity and enthusiasm of the British public ; but there will be a great reward in store : the resurrection for evermore of stricken Belgium. We need no nobler monument of this war. Every house, every field in Belgium will praise and glorify the heroic deeds of the Allied armies. Belgium will stand then as a testimony of the new covenant, the new alliance between a regenerated Europe and her God. The whole country will be like the Ark, and all the Allied nations might well dance around it, like David. England will certainly lead the round, and, for all we know, Germany might be allowed to look on, as did Michal—only Germany will not laugh.

London, July, 1915.



PRAYER BEFORE WAR.

AUGUST, 1914.

LORD God, ere yet our drums are rolled,
Kneeling before Thine awful throne,
We pray that us-ward as of old
Thy favouring mercies may be shown—
We who too often filled with pride
Have in our hearts Thy power denied
And trusted to ourselves alone.

Thou hast been gracious unto us,
And stood as guardian at our gate ;
Steadied us on the perilous
High path of our imperial fate :
Yet when have we, our faults in view,
With fear searched out and striven to do
The work for which Thou mad'st us great ?

Have we not, rather, turned aside
Well knowing the right, to do the wrong ?
How hast Thou, tolerant of our pride,
Borne with our rebel hearts so long,
And spared us who, as crowning sin,
Have deemed that strength our own wherein
Our feet were firm, our hands were strong ?

Rich altars have we raised to Thee
And fruits and fatlings on them laid,
Well satisfied that men should see
And marvel at our vain parade ;
But that one only sacrifice
Which Thou, O God, wilt not despise—
A contrite heart—we have not made.

And now when war confounds the world
On Thy strong arm we fain would lean :
Our flags ere this have been unfurled
To ends that Thou hast sorrowing seen :

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Remember not that we of old
Too oft unblessed by Thee were bold,
For, see, to-day our hands are clean.

Wherefore Thy help and strength we seek,
In this fierce quarrel upon us thrust,
For, save Thou stand beside us, weak
Are we although our cause is just ;
Thou know'st how hard for peace we strove,
That without wrath e'en now we move
And do but fight because we must.

Nor less, because aroused by wrong
And cries of far distress we go
In the great name of Freedom strong
To grapple with a ruthless foe,
Thy guidance we beseech, for Thou,
To whom in armour girt we bow,
Alone to what we march dost know.

The day of trial is come—the day
So long foreseen, so fraught with fate ;
With troubled hearts once more we pray
(Remembering Thee, ah, not too late !)
That Thou for all our faults of will,
Our pride, our greed, wilt hold us still
To Thy great purpose dedicate.

W. G. HOLE

PART I.

SINCE THE GREAT WAR—AUGUST, 1914.

TO THE BELGIANS.



RACE that Cæsar knew,
That won stern Roman praise,
What land not envies you
The laurel of these days?

You built your cities rich
Around each towered hall,—
Without, the statued niche,
Within, the pictured wall.

Your ship-thronged wharves, your marts,
With gorgeous Venice vied;
Peace and her famous arts
Were yours: though tide on tide

Of Europe's battle scourged
Black fields and reddened soil,
From blood and smoke emerged
Peace and her fruitful toil.

Yet when the challenge rang
"The War-Lord comes: give room!"
Fearless to arms you sprang
Against the odds of doom.

Like your own Damian,
Who sought that lepers' isle
To die a simple man
For men with tranquil smile.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

So strong in faith you dared
Defy the giant, scorn
Ignobly to be spared,
Though trampled, spoiled, and torn.

And in your faith arose
And smote, and smote again,
Till those astonished foes
Reeled from their mounds of slain.

The faith that the free soul,
Untaught by force to quail,
Through fire and dirge and dole
Prevails and shall prevail.

Still for your frontier stands
The host that knew no dread,
Your little, stubborn land's
Nameless, immortal dead.

LAURENCE BINYON

ENGLAND TO BELGIUM.

NOT lusting for a brief renown
Nor apt in any vain dispute
You throw the scythes of autumn down,
And leave your dues of autumn fruit
Unharvested, and dare the wrong
Of death's immitigable wing,
And on your banners burn a song
That gods unrisen yet shall sing.

Because your Belgian fields are dear
And now they suffer black despite,
Because your womanhood can hear
The menace on the lips of night,
Because you are a little clan
Of brothers, and because there comes
The thief among you, to a man
You take the challenge of your drums

Not all our tears and wrath shall weigh
The utter bitterness that falls,
O Belgian hearts, on you this day,
The sorrow of your broken walls,
And desolated hearths, the crime
Of Prussian sword and Prussian flame,
But, brothers, with the world we chime
The story of your Belgian name.

We will be comrades at your side,
Your battle and our battle one
To turn again this monstrous pride
That veils but does not know the sun;
Our blood and thews with yours are set
Against this creed of bar and goad,
The Ironside is in us yet
As when the ranks of Cromwell rode.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

For all things clean, for all things brave,
For peace, for spiritual light,
To keep love's body whole, to save
The hills of intellectual sight,
Girt at your Belgian gate we stand,
Our trampled faith undaunted still,
With heart unseared and iron hand
And old indomitable will.

JOHN DRINKWATER

TO ALBERT, KING OF THE BELGIANS.

KING, who art crowned with greater grief and glory
Than ever brows anointed yet have worn
Of Kings in song or story ;
Grief heavier to be borne
Than Priam's when he humbled his white head
To beg the bones of Hector ; glory higher
Than any man's since, when his country bled,
His towns were sacked, his minsters were afire,
The hunted Alfred, holding faith unsoiled,
Won, winning back his kingdom ; thou,
Man among men, though now
Thy wasted armies and thy lands despoiled
Call thee their King in vain, this comfort take
And doubt not : fame and honour such as none
Of woman born has won
Are thine till the last thunders shake
This earth out of the heavens, and thou shalt reign
While grey seas beat the long, low Belgian shore,
In glory without stain
Among the hearts of men when Kings shall be no more.

WILSON BENINGTON

A SALUTE TO THE BELGIAN FLAG.

*(Set to music to the Irish melody "Go Where Glory Waits Thee."
Dedicated to the Duchesse de Vendome, before whom it was sung
at the great gathering for the "Salute of the Belgian Flag" on
Wimbledon Common, Autumn, 1914.)*

WHEN, O gallant warders
Of the Belgian borders,
Our Foes came parleying at your gate :
"Hear our Master's Message!
Yield his armies passage!
Else all your land lies desolate!"
Did you pause to palter?
Nay; without one falter,
On that base assaulter
Proud defiance hurled;
While your Banner olden—
Red and black and golden—
To your endless glory ye unfurled.

Then the evil clangour
Of the German's anger
Burst where ye couched across his way.
Yet in wrath ye faced him,
Leaped upon and chased him.
Launched like young lions on your prey.
Aye! though bolted thunder
Rent your ranks in sunder,
To the whole earth's wonder
Still ye fought on and on!
Proved at Liège's portal
Heroes as immortal
As your proud Sires who smote the Don.

There your dread endurance
Shook our Foe's assurance,
There laughed to scorn his plot profound—
Free of your resistance,
Far in southern distance,
Fair France's knell and ours to sound.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Through that respite given,
Though long rearward driven,
Now with ranks unriven,
 We attack in turn.
Therefore, Banner olden,
Red and black and golden,
 We uplift thee by our Standard stern,
Vowing as we take thee,
And saluting "break" thee—
Never to forsake thee,
 Flag of bright renown!
Till, with legions scattered,
Rent and spent and shattered,
 Belgium's Spoiler we have beaten down.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

(*"Belgium is happy to be able to declare that she will assume the defence of her fortified places."*—BELGIUM, August 5, 1914.)

SHE is the happy warrior! From the last
Inch of her native soil though she be hurled,
In every freeman's heart her flag stands fast,
And her high soul possesses all the world:
O fools! what guns can ever conquer this
Invulnerable virgin fortalice?

WILFRID BLAIR

TO KING ALBERT OF THE BELGIANS.

("Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just."—SHAKESPEARE.)

ALBERT the brave ! 'Tis not mere empty praise
The world bestows on courage truly great,
For though kings may be served whose power abides,
And thine awhile is forfeit to sad fate,
Yet in the lowest depths thou art brave still,
And thousands e'en would die to do thy will !

Yet, hero-king, thou art not only brave,
As many others are and well may be,
But also faithful to the noblest cause—
Honour and truth and most just liberty !
Clinging to ruin's verge to what is Right,
Rather than sell thy soul to perjured Might !

Yea, thou art good ! We do not flatter thee :
Albert the good, by ev'ry righteous count !
For who like thee so patiently endures
Ills which no human powers can yet surmount ?
In camp and trench 'tis thine to do and dare,
Nor yet decline the humblest soldier's fare !

Brave, Faithful, Good ! What more can words express ?
And so what guerdon is thy well-earned due ?
Not fame alone, which soon may pass away,
But what worlds cannot give—a conscience true !
And yet we yearn to give thee back thine own,
And see thee reap indeed as thou hast sown !

Belgium shall then be born anew in truth,
Its ancient glories flourish yet again,
And on its throne restored to greater bliss,
Thou, king beloved by all, shalt sit and reign ;
Good, brave and faithful, be thou to the end,
And God thy country and thy crown defend !

JOHN R. PALMER

TO "LITTLE" BELGIUM.

I.

("There was war in Heaven."—Rev. xii., 7.)

SURELY 'twas hell, not Heaven, where first was war,
Where first infernal passions woke and stirred—
War, which makes Heaven impossible in a word,
And Murder bids her bloody gate unbar!

As well might one, under the Juggernaut car,
And knowing all annihilate shall be,
Babble of life and immortality
As call that "heaven" where hell and hatred are.

Yet there was war in Heaven, as on this star,
Yea, even there was War's red flag unfurled,
As if High God would warn a craven world
In Heaven itself, worse can befall than war.

II.

("Give peace in our time, O Lord!"—Prayer Book.)

So runs the ancient prayer, and I who hold
War to be bloody, damnable, abhorred,
Pray: "Not in our time, only, be it Lord,
But for all time may peace this isle enfold!"

Yet rather than our England cease to be
What England is—Honour's own diadem;
Rather than fail one single sword to them
(Our word, God's arm, their surest guarantee),

That "little," loyal race whom, near and far,
A world acclaims for glorious, deathless deed,
Rather than fail GREAT Belgium in her need,
Rather than this, in God's own name, be war!

COULSON KERNAHAN

THE STRICKEN PEOPLE.

THE voice of the stricken people rose up from a land
of woe—

“ Our homes are burned behind us, and whither shall we
go ?

The land we loved is wasted, the land of our heart's
desire

Swept with the thunder of cannon and devastating fire.

We were but a gentle people who tilled the land we
loved,

Contented with our labour and the sphere wherein we
moved,

We asked not wealth of commerce, we sought not lands
afar,

Ours were the gains of Peace, and not the thefts of war.

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, the full year went
its way,

Birth and Marriage and Death, Labour and Rest and
Play,

These were the things we sought, and these were the
things that came,

We left to the great world-nations the thought of power
and fame.

We launched no mighty navies, nor placed our trust
in arms,

Our strength was in our people who worked the busy
farms,

The life of our land was joyous, contented we lived in
peace,

And now we wander homeless till ravaging war shall
cease.

We did but dare to answer a strong and bullying foe,
When he sought to trample our vineyards, with a firm
and gentle 'No!'

And he swore a hate undying, and drove us from the
land,

And our fields are black with ruin, our homes now roof-
less stand.

He took our little children and butchered them in rage,
Not even the prayers of mothers could all his fury
assuage ;

Our young men fell in battle and found a glorious death,
For the swift fire leapt to embrace them, and took
their dying breath."

The voice of a homeless people cries up to the ears of
God—

"Black ruin and famine confront us wherever the
vandal trod,

Wilt Thou not succour the needy, and lead us back again
To the land where we lived and laboured thro' days of
sun and rain ?

We are but a little nation, and we ask but this of life—
To labour again in the homeland, with Peace in the place
of Strife,

To plough and sow and gather, and sing our songs in
the corn !

How long shall the Night loom o'er us, how long ere the
Day is born ? "

CECIL ROBERTS

THE WIFE OF FLANDERS.

LOW and brown barns, thatched and repatched
and tattered,

Where I had seven sons until to-day—
A little hill of hay your spur has scattered. . . .
This is not Paris. You have lost the way.

You, staring at your sword to find it brittle,
Surprised at the surprise that was your plan,
Who shaking and breaking barriers not a little,
Find never more the death-door of Sedan.

Must I for more than carnage call you claimant,
Paying you a penny for each son you slay ?
Man, the whole globe in gold were no repayment
For what you have lost. And how shall I repay ?

What is the price of that red spark that caught me
From a kind farm that never had a name ?
What is the price of that dead man they brought me ?
For other dead men do not look the same.

How should I pay for one poor graven steeple
Whereon you shattered what you shall not know ?
How should I pay you, miserable people,
How should I pay you everything you owe ?

Unhappy, can I give you back your honour ?
Though I forgave, would any man forget ?
While all the great green land has trampled on her
The treason and terror of the night we met.

Not any more in vengeance or in pardon,
One old wife bargains for a bean that's hers.
You have no word to break : no heart to harden.
Ride on and prosper. You have lost your spurs.

G. K. CHESTERTON

THE CRUCIFIED RACES.

TO some though few it hath been given to die
For happier nations,
That else on cruel Calvaries would lie ;
To bear the daily cross, the shattered tie,
And be the dust in the grand new foundations.
Their bitter part,
The precious burden of a broken heart.

The crucified, the beautiful, the best,
Above all others
These are, who in their toils and sufferings rest ;
They carry brighter worlds upon their breast,
Content to be the victims slain for brothers.
Thus heavenly-wise,
By no less means, would come back Paradise.

This was their portion to be scapegoats, curst
In dreadful corners,
Blunting red flame or stabbing steel the first ;
Their privilege to face affliction's worst,
To kneel and know the prize of helpless mourners.
Dying they live,
And of their most and dearest treasures give.

They were for ever bound and tost and torn,
Meeting as proxies
All sorrows of the earth, the nail, the thorn ;
And from their ashes broader skies are born,
Fresh realms, and the diviner heterodoxies.
Their scattered bones
Were the grand bases of new thoughts and thrones.

Their splendid pains and passions opened thus
Through damnèd martyrs
The gates eternal, and new heavens to us ;
Their vaster choice, the glory chivalrous,

Secured for men their title deeds and charters.
Daring to be
Themselves, as Christ, they left the kingdoms free.

From Israel down to Belgium have they kept
God's holy altar
And been the fuel, worked for Him and wept ;
Guarding the light, while others sinned and slept,
By trust that in the furnace did not falter.
Like burning lamps,
They illumed the darkness of dead courts and camps.

F. W. ORDE WARD

BELGIUM.

WHEN in a nation's heart the sense of right
Burns up with ardour for a noble cause,
Then greatness with immeasurable might
Stands new-revealed and draws the world's applause.
A nation's glory lives not in its laws,
Nor fair possessions glorious to the sight,
Nor in the strength of arm that overawes
And threatens by its potency to smite.

Belgium, 'twas given thee to show in deed
How strong, invincible in spirit, they
Who fight when outraged honour, treaties spurned,
And devastated lands for vengeance plead :
Nor vainly—of thy sons long years shall say
How bright with glory heroes' brows then burned.

CECIL ROBERTS

A LITTLE PEOPLE.

TO BELGIUM.

A LITTLE people, that walked hand-in-hand
With peace, with truth, in labour and in awe.
Lo, there came by a mailèd lord of war,
Goliath-like, across their level land,
Stumbling and striding, drunken, full of lust,
And trampled in the blood-besprinkled dust
A little people.

A little people rising from the dust
To grasp a helping hand, and make a name
For courage, with those comrades whom they trust
More than the spurnèd scroll that burnt in flame
Lit by that man of iron, who to her doom
Hurleth his fatherland : they faced their gloom,
This little people.

A little people ? Nay, a good and great,
Crushing the littleness of sin and pride,
Contemptuous of petty war and hate,
Great with the nations standing at their side
To cheer and succour them ; whom God doth try
With His keen sword to prove their greatness by.
His little people !

VIOLET GILLESPIE

GLORIOUS BELGIUM.

'T WAS ever thus, it is God's way, who reckons
His values not as we by gold and spice,
But with a deeper and a dearer price ;
He bids and beckons
His servants to a feast, in sacrifice.
So here a man and there a martyred race
Die, for His work to win a splendid space.

His chosen peoples were those crowned by fitness
For something vaster than our common care,
Dowered with the daily burden that He bare ;
To be His witness,
And in the shaping of His glory share.
They entered heaven yet by the narrow gate
Of fire and sword, and through hell's awful fate.

And yet thrice-happy they who endured affliction
Beyond mere suffering and for others fell,
That these in blood-bought Paradise might dwell ;
Christ's crucifixion
Made them immortal, as is Israel.
God anguished with them, who in willing pangs
Upon the same old Cross for ever hangs.

But now is glorious Belgium through extremer
Sorrow that nation never felt before,
All tested in the iron furnace sore,
The world's redeemer,
That brothers might be free for evermore.
Sublime her portion and supreme her part,
While gained by many a broken life and heart

Her murdered sweet babe innocents, and woman
Dishonoured, outraged, by a damnèd lust
Whereto nought sacred was—no truth, no trust ;
These were her human

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Offering Divine, if trodden in shame and dust.
And, through their pain and sadness, sinful earth
Baptised in tears shall find a second birth.

Most glorious Belgium, that with conquering weakness
Took pain and torture to thy piercèd breast,
As though the jewels by salvation prest ;
Thy Christly meekness
Hath given thee beauty, for all years possess.
Yea, from thy grave of misery and crime
Shall grow a bigger world, a better time.

F. W. ORDE WARD

BELGIUM.

WHEN I bethink how nations wax and wane,
These like ripe fruit slow-cankered from inside,
These falling swift from overweening pride
That held the gentle heart in high disdain,
This battered to its knees to rise again,
One thing alone above the surging tide
And flux of things seems surely to abide,
The soul that doth invincible remain.

To you, heroic Belgium, beaten down
Because you trusted in a neighbour's word,
Has come the terrible night, but comes the morn.
Wasted with fire and bleeding from the sword,
Proudly you wear self-sacrifice for crown
And find your soul immortally re-born.

H. D. RAWNSLEY

BELGIUM THE BARLASS.

THE night was still. The King sat with the Queen.
She sang. Her maidens spun. A peaceful scene.

Sudden, wild echoes shake the castle wall.
Their foes come crashing through the outer hall.

They rush like thunder down the gallery floor
. . . . Someone has stolen the bolt that bars the door !

No pin to hold the loops, no stick, no stave,
Nothing ! An open door, an open grave !

Then Catherine Bar-lass thrust her naked arm
(A girl's arm, white as milk, alive and warm)

Right through the loops from which the bolt was gone :
" 'Twill hold (she said) until they break the bone—

My King, you have one instant to prepare !"
She said no more, because the thrust was there.

Of have I heard that tale of Scotland's King,
The Poet, and Kate the Bar-lass. (Men will sing

For aye the deed one moment brings to birth—
Such moments are the ransom of our Earth.)

Brave Belgium, Bar-lass of our western world,
Who, when the treacherous Prussian tyrant hurled

His hordes against our peace, thrust a slight hand,
So firm, to bolt our portals and withstand,

Whatever prove the glory of our affray,
Thine arm, thy heart, thine act have won the day !

A. MARY F. ROBINSON (Madame Duclaux)

THE KAISER AND BELGIUM.

HE said : " Thou petty people, let me pass !
What can'st thou do but bow to me and
kneel ? "

But sudden a dry land caught fire like grass
And answer hurtled but from shell and steel.

He looked for silence, but a thunder came ;

Upon him from Liège a leaden hail.

All Belgium flew up at his throat in flame.

Till at her gates amazed his legions quail !

Take heed, for now on haunted ground they tread ;

There bowed a mightier War-Lord to his fall ;

Fear ! Lest that very grass again grow red

With blood of German now, as then of Gaul !

If him whom God destroys He maddens first,

Then thy destruction slake thy madman's thirst !

STEPHEN PHILLIPS

THE ANSWER.

" **B**EN to us," they said, " thy city gate,
To let our armies pass. Go ope them wide,
Else do we ravage all thy countryside,
With fire and sword make all things desolate,
Destroy the fields, thy homesteads desecrate,
Cast down the Peace Gods that with thee abide,
And trample them to dust. Then, swift, decide,
And make reply, oh little land. We wait."
But Belgium answered, " Ye can bring me death,
And yet ye cannot take from me one thing
That stays with me through all eternity,
And that thing, Honour. Naught else mattereth.
Wherefore, oh grave, for me thou hast no sting,
And thou, oh death, thou hast no victory."

PHYLLIS MARKS

THE BELGIC GATE.

THE *Day has come*, the hour has struck
The Eagle's plumes again to pluck—
'Tis written in the Book of Fate.
The God of Hosts, the Lord and I—
The Lord of Earth, the God on high—
We seek again the Gallic Gate.

The Kaiser bids his warhorse prance
Along the frontier line of France,
And gathers with imperious state
His serried hosts along the line—
This despot of the right Divine,
And thunders at the Gallic Gate.

In vain. Along that frontier line
A million bayonets gleam and shine,
Embattled France cries out, "Too late ;
The day has come our own to gain ;
Alsace, Lorraine are French again ;
Thou shalt not enter by this gate."

Enraged, the Bully turns aside,
And bids his cohorts northward ride :
"I'll cheat this scurvy trick of fate."
He smiles and smiles ; le Roi s'amuse ;
"I'll cross the silver gentle Meuse,
And enter by the Belgic Gate."

The Wolf speaks low, with honeyed voice ;
He gives the Belgic Lamb its choice—
To let him cross the Belgic state :
"Else swiftly note, I prithee list,
I strike thee with the mailed fist ;
Come, open quick the Belgic Gate."

The Lamb replies : "False notes of peace :
I see the Wolf beneath thy fleece.
Thy answer take, nor hesitate—

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Get quickly hence, I'll hear no more.
Hark, hear the Belgian cannon roar,
I will not yield the Belgic Gate."

Quick as the lightning lights the hills,
With lion hearts and dauntless wills,
The burghers of this gallant State
Ascend the walls and ramparts high,
Ready to suffer, starve, or die—
These braves who keep the Belgic Gate.

The Teuton snarls, tears off the mask,
And smiles at such an easy task—
This combat 'twixt the small and great.
The sound alone, "Die Wacht am Rhein,"
Without a gun, without a mine,
Will open wide this Belgic Gate.

But no ! Liège unfurls the flag,
And spurns upon the German rag—
"Since lust of power nor blood can sate
Thy murderous greed, and we must fight
For freedom and for Belgium's right,
Our bodies keep the Belgic Gate."

In vain the mighty German hosts
Attack the walls, the outer posts,
Where Belgic heroes consecrate
Their flesh and blood, to ramparts make,
Where deadly fire their numbers rake,
But still they keep the Belgic Gate.

While stout Boncelles and Chaudfontaine
Pour from their mouths their deadly rain,
The brave defenders congregate ;
The portals ope, and with cold steel
They make the haughty Teuton reel,
And drive him from the Belgic Gate.

THE BELGIC GATE.

The Teuton turns in rage, despair ;
No entrance for the Tyrant there.

His mailed fist he shakes in hate,
Then skelters quickly 'cross the Meuse ;
His leer is gone ; le Roi s'accuse,
And damns that bloody Belgic Gate.

The world cries out, " Stout heart, stand fast,
A little yet, thy foe outlast ;


Stand firm, brave soul—not yet too late—
Till France and Britain come to thee,
The one o'er land, the one o'er sea,
God keep thee and the Belgic gate."

" Glory to thee," the nations cry
To-day, through time, eternity.

Thy name adorns the scroll of fate—
LIÈGE! the nations bow to thee,
Thou sentinel of liberty
Who bravely kept the Belgic Gate.

WM. MADDEN


TO BELGIUM.

 LITTLE land with lasting glory crowned,
Whose sons for Liberty their blood outpoured,
And backward hurled the abhorred Teuton's horde
Who sought to blot thee from thine ancient ground,
Though never fear within thy heart was found,
And all thy spirit is as a shining sword,
How shalt thou bear these praises past record
Wherewith the wide world's uttermost shores resound ?—

As now we living, with tumultuous breath,
Acclaim thy splendour and thy glory unsung,
So through all ages shall men honour thee,
Till sun and moon subside in quiet death,
And every star in heaven's high casement hung,
Fade, and all sound be sundered from the sea.

ANTHONY KIRBY GILL

TO BELGIUM.

 GREAT-HEARTED Belgium ! England weeps for
you ;
But, like a mother, smiling through her tears,
Glad that her son, in his first manhood's years,
Has borne himself as she would wish him do.
So, long ago, the Tyrol patriot drew
(Scorning, as you have scorned, all craven fears)
Into one loyal heart six Austrian spears,
And by that splendid gap let Freedom through !
Shall England, mother of the free, forget ?
Oh ! let her rather sink beneath her seas !
Take you this promise, Belgium—him who set
This cup to your brave lips her hands shall seize,
And he shall pay, in blood and tears, the debt
And drain a bitterer chalice to the lees !

H. W. BLISS

A LAMENTATION OVER BELGIUM.



H, weep for the Land that is weeping for her dead !
Who sits, a maid deflowered, with mourning-
robes outspread,
With the iron in her soul and the dust upon her head !

Oh, weep for the Land, and the pleasant ways that were !
Her cities were as flowers that adorn a rich parterre ;
She smiled as a maiden delighting to be fair.

Alas, alas, her cities ! They are fall'n or burnt with fire,
Like flowers rent and ruined which men no more desire ;
Her face is marred with blood and her bosom foul
with mire.

Oh, weep for the Land, and her men that are no more
Oh, weep for the Land, and her widows weeping sore,
And her children begging bread from door to alien door !

She was nursed among the nations, a daughter fair to see,
A little last-born darling, a nursling of the knee,
The darling of the nations, free-born among the free.

They stood, the war-girt nations, in arms around her
then,
And swore to defend her, a maiden among men ;
They swore an oath confederate, and confirmed it with
the pen.

Oh, shame upon the false head, that held not by his
troth !

Oh, shame upon the false hand, that signed and brake
the oath !

More shame upon the false lips that feigned the hand
was loth !

But woe for the Land, that sat in selfish ease,
And stored plenteous garner, and played on pleasant
leas,
And mocked at the menace of storm across the seas !

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Oh, woe for the Land, that remembered not her word,
Nor heeded darkening heavens or far-off thunder heard,
Nor looked to her armour, nor kept her house prepared !

" Sufficient," so she laughed, " is the evil to the day !
When the foe is at the gate we can fight instead of pay."
And remembered not her friends in forefront of the fray.

" Arise ! 'tis the tempest ! It is on us ! Save us now ! "
We heard the cry of anguish and bethought us of our vow
And answered : " England's honour is England's soul
we trow.

Fear not ! we keep our promise ; we make this war
our own ! "

Alas, for the idle boast, the empty trumpet blown !
Alas, for the plighted word redeemed in words alone !

Alas, for the sword in the scabbard left to rust !
Alas, for the spear not sharpened for the thrust !
Alas, for the unready who in untried armour trust !

What worth were oaths unbroken, when walls and
cities brake ?

What mattered we forsook not, when these must all
forsake ?

What profits England's waking ? Can Belgium's dead
awake ?

Was England's name upheld when the towers of Louvain
fell ?

Was England's honour proved in the havoc of the shell ?
Was England's word made good in the hurricane of Hell ?

A LAMENTATION OVER BELGIUM.

For they who brake that covenant delight in men of
deed ;
And we who kept that covenant to men of words give
heed ;
And the harvest is to all as the sowing of the seed.

Oh, what shall be the ending ? Can smitten Belgium
rise,
When the smoke of her burning ascendeth to the skies,
And nought is left her children except their weeping eyes?

Oh, what shall be the end to her ? What comfort of
her pain ?
Her cities, who will build them, her fields who plant
again ?
And who will raise up sons to her heroic as her slain ?

Her fortune who may tell her ? Our hands may turn
indeed
The blackened pages of the Past, but who the Future
read ?
Save this : The blood of heroes of noble lives is seed.

A hundred years have passed away since Waterloo was
won.
A hundred years shall pass again, and all our days be
done
For whom the dreadful hours now like drops of life-blood
run.

And when our children's children shall walk that blood-
drenched soil,
Where scarce is field to ravage or city left to spoil,
And see the cattle grazing and townsfolk at their toil ;

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Then shall they say of Belgium, in language soft with
tears,

“ She was a lesser star whom fire made bright above
her peers,

To be the shining lodestar by which all honour steers.”

And Peace, at last set surely on guard around the girth
Of this war-tortured planet in air and sea and earth,
When numbering the nations, and weighing each his
worth,

Shall take with love most tender this wounded land
to her.

Ev’n as a mother doth the child of suffering prefer ;
And say before her prouder sons, nor find one gainsayer :

“ Lo, she hath given more than all, this little one, to me !
For they gave of their plenty, the wealth of land and sea ;
But she has given all she was, and all she hoped to be ! ”

F. W. BOURDILLON

BELGIUM.

HEARTSTRUCK she stands—our Lady of all
Sorrows—

Circled with ruin, sunk in deep amaze ;
Facing the shadow of her dark to-morrows,
Mourning the glory of her yesterdays.

Yet is she queen, by every royal token,
There, where the storm of desolation swirled ;
Crowned only with the thorn—despoiled and broken—
Her kingdom is the heart of all the world.

She made her breast a shield, her sword a splendour,
She rose like flame upon the darkened ways ;
So, through the anguish of her proud surrender,
Breaks the clear vision of undying praise.

MARION COUTHOUY SMITH

BELGIUM.

I.


THOU youngest of the kingdoms, home of art
And joy and beauty, most serenely fair,
About thee breathed a purer, larger air,
Wherein all goodly and gracious things had part ;
From thee did every pleasant pathway start
To traverse deeps or climb the starry stair,
Crowned like a Queen with heaven upon her hair
Who ruled in glory on some golden chair.
Dethronèd now, but in thy doom more great
Than in the splendour of the prosperous pride .
Which reaped the riches gathered far and wide ;
At mid disaster mistress of thy fate
And clothed by death with a divine estate,
God and His hosts are marshalled at thy side.

II.

Immortal in those ashes, from thy grave
A grander kingdom yet shall reign and rise
Out of red ruin's tempest wild and wave,
And spread enchantments broader to the skies ;
Strong from destruction and by suffering wise,
With all that courage wrought or martyrs gave,
Delivering us and ours thou didst not save
Thyself in opening a new paradise.
But thy defeat is triumph sweeter still,
That grave shall be a cradle whence may shoot
A vaster promise born of iron ill ;
From the celestial realms' eternal root,
To bear rich harvests and a riper fruit
And rest within the shadow of God's Will.

F. W. ORDE WARD

DESOLATE.

 H land of Peace, where Plenty dwelt serene,
Where children gambol'd on each village green.

Where priceless treasures gemmed the cities fair,
With classic monuments of Art most rare.

What art thou now ? A country desolate,
Polluted, ravished by foul hands of hate.

Where are those babes ? What means that weeping
sore ?
The mother-hearts grief-stricken evermore.

And Peace with Plenty, her adoring child,
Has fled in horror from a land defiled.

Those cities fair, those priceless works of art
Lie trampled in the dust with Belgium's heart.

With Belgium's heart ! Nay, *that* can never die,
'Twill live thro' time and thro' eternity.

And now, Oh God, vengeance is Thine alone ;
Thou heard'st the children's cry, the virgin's moan,

And saw Thy saints e'en at Thine altars slain,
And hearts o'erwhelmed with sorrow break in twain.

And Thou art just ; stretch forth Thy mighty hand
And crush for evermore that tyrant band

(Who make e'en devils blush for very shame,
So foul the deeds done in Thy Holy Name).

And bless brave Belgium's King, restore his throne
With Thy all gracious praise " Well done ! Well done ! "

JEANIE DONNAN

WHAT MATTERS IT ?

IMMORTAL Belgium, what great place hast thou
Gained in the hearts of freedom-loving souls ?
Thy cruel invaders, proud and insolent,
Forgot thy sons, though few, were valiant.
The tyrant once again tramples thy sod :
He cares not for thy rights, nor for his word,
Nor what a scrap of paper may demand.
Might is his watchword, and the grovelling cur,
Destruction, struts beneath his banner there,
In thy fair lands, that once so fertile were,
Now ruined, and desolate. What matters it ?
Thy sons have shed their blood for all the world.
Brave Belgium, in thy years of peacefulness
Wer't ne'er so grand, as now, when desolate.

BERTHA BAILY

TO BELGIUM.

BRAVE nation, whose intrepid sons have dared
To flout the vicious threat of Kaiser's rage ;
Thy noble act shall glow in his'try's page,
A beacon, midst the wreckage round it reared
By sordid avarice ; 'gainst which thou bared
The sword of Liberty, which act, dim age
Hereafter shall extol, and by it gauge
The import of thy stand, which Europe spared
The bitter pangs of pride's potential fall
'Neath coward stroke of ruthless tyrant's hand ;
Which sought to crush by vain display of might
Thy frail objection raised by honour's call
Against the violation of a land
Which stood by liberty and honoured right.

HAROLD LILLEY

TO M. MAETERLINCK.


(" It is a pitiful story that I have to relate : it is the story of a little kingdom which has kept its pledge and died for it. Belgium's neutrality was guaranteed by the greatest power in Europe—England ; and she has kept her pledge loyally."—M. MAETERLINCK at Newcastle-on-Tyne, October 10, 1914.)

SIR, 'tis not ours with easy words to cry
(Although we read as ours your land's dark tale),
" Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail."—
What you call pitiful, how shall we deny ?
But this we dare to say, that through such high
Heroic seeking of the eternal Grail
Of Freedom, though the search seem but to avail
For martyrdom, a nation cannot die.

Your little kingdom, glamoured with such spoils
Of olden glory as rejoice her peers,
Outbraved them with the best that Honour gives
To fearless battlers in forlornest broils.—
Weaving a golden tale with blood and tears
Your little Belgium died. Great Belgium lives !

WILFRID BLAIR

BRAVE BELGIUM.

 H, Belgium ! Brave Belgium !
Thou hast for honour stood ;
Though thy homes are now made desolate,
And thy lands are steeped in blood.
Oh, Belgium ! Brave Belgium !
Thou hast been sore opprest
By murders, cold and cruel,
And the wicked warriors' jest.

Oh, Belgium ! Brave Belgium !
We sigh for thee to-day ;
For thee, thy King, and country,
England doth daily pray.
Thy children now are scattered
To other lands afar ;
Unjustly thine, brave Belgium !
This bitter price of war.

Oh, Belgium ! Brave Belgium !
Thou hast an honoured name,
Thine enemies have for themselves
Reaped " everlasting shame,"
But thy homes, thy lands, and kingdom,
Shall once again be thine :
Yea, Belgium will be thought of
To the very end of time.

Oh, Belgium ! Brave Belgium !
When times and wars are not ;
When " the Great Books " are opened,
Thou wilt not be forgot ;
Thy valour and thy greatness
Shall then commended be ;
Well done ! Thou good and faithful one,
The Lord will say to thee.

DAVID W. GREAVES

CRUCIFIED BELGIUM.

WHEN I behold the lamentable woe
That a brave people — challenged thrice to
yield,

But thrice arisen indignantly to shield
Their hearths and homesteads from a barbarous foe—
Have in the venture dared to undergo

Rather than let a treaty counter-sealed
By neighbour nations be by force repealed—
A “scrap of paper” wind-tossed to and fro.

Then in the darkness 'neath a wrathful sky,
While the earth quakes for cannon and the sword,

I see a cross, and on that cross there hangs
The body of a people in its pangs,

I hear from far an agonising cry,
“ Into Thy hands—into Thy hands, O Lord.”

H. D. RAWNSLEY

THE SECOND CRUCIFIXION;

OR THE ETERNAL SACRIFICE.

AND must I bear once more My Cross, the burden
Of tempest-shaken lands—
With piercèd feet and hands ;
I who would ask no less or other guerdon
Than sufferers' wants, and enemies' demands ?
I must renew the passion and the pain,
And for My sons be crucified again.

Quo vadis, Domine ? To the lost regions
And murdered Belgium's wrack,
With blasted temples black ;
And where is poured the blood of countless legions,
I must redeem My children and go back.
There are My priests, My saints with high intents,
White virgins and pure baby innocents.

Men have rebuilt My Calvary, and broken
The peace of every shrine
With orgies worse than swine ;
They have killed My servants at their prayers, and
spoken
In blasphemous acts and outraged the Divine.
Their every wound I felt—it was My own,
Each blast of ruin upon Me was blown.

There stands My Cross once more, 'mid crime that
palters
With precepts old and just,
And hath betrayed its trust ;
They have destroyed My worship, and the altars
Of centuries are now but death and dust.
Yet from their ashes fairer forms shall rise,
Destruction open paths of Paradise.

My Golgotha is ready here, the ages
Exact an awful price,
Greater than gold or spice ;
And I must tread the same dear dreadful stages,
Again a willing Priest and Sacrifice.
My privilege is such eternal pangs,
To bear the doom where Love forever hangs.

Ah, do I call this fearful fate the second ?
Is upon earth a spot,
Where Calvary comes not ?
And shall my sorrows by time's rules be reckoned,
Whose crown is thorns and agony the lot ?
My treasures but with the transgressors lie,
My throne is grief and daily must I die.

F. W. ORDE WARD

CRY OF THE BELGIAN CHILDREN.

WHAT did we know of war, its rights and wrongs ?
We heard it named, but gave it not a thought.
Gaily we sang our patriotic songs,
And with imaginary Germans fought.
We manned our forts of mud against attack,
And, childlike, revelled in the dust and grime,
Driving our fancied foe with fury back,
Guarding our homes. Kaiser, was this a crime ?

Nearer It drew, but little did we care ;
When father left we watched him march away,
Envied his uniform and martial air,
Then marched ourselves to meet the foe in play.
Only the look of grief on mother's face
Caused vague unrest within our hearts to stir ;
And, clumsily, with kiss and fond embrace
We did our very best to comfort her.

And then It came, and with it terror tense,
And fire and blood, blighting with its foul breath
All that we knew of love and innocence,
Teaching us pain and death, and worse than death.
Mother and sister butchered 'neath our eyes,
Crimes that our minds, thank God, could never guess ;
Screening his firing line our childhood dies
To meet the War Lord's call for frightfulness.

*Kaiser, when soon or late your hour shall come,
And at God's throne you, suppliant, bend the knee,
Think you those prattling voices will be dumb
Which now are silenced by your dread decree ?
When boastful pride is turned to abject dread,
What bid for mercy will you make the plea,
Facing the righteous wrath of Him Who said
" Suffer the little ones to come to me " ?*

A. R. HAMILTON

TO THE MOON.

(The Belgians declared that the bright moonlight was beneficial to them during German night attacks.)

CALM moon, that thro' the trees
Peers with thy soft, pale eyes,
Whilst the summer breeze
Sinks, as the painful sighs
Of broken hearts that would, but cannot weep,
Where art thou sadly gazing whilst we sleep?
Is't that 'neath thy calm face,
Bathed in its own hot blood,
The flower of a race
Lies trampled in the mud,
And looks on thee with eyes of agony?
A thousand bleeding men that would but die!
Torn lungs and shell-rent limbs
Hard sobs through tight-clenched teeth
Bright eyes that death's hand dims
A blood-drenched field beneath
How can'st thou gaze so calm-eyed, silvery-white,
Whilst, choked with pain and blood, men writhe
all night?

HUBERT DAYNE

A GRAVE IN FLANDERS.

*(Captain the Hon. A. E. B. O'Neill, M.P., was killed in action
in November, 1914.)*

HERE in the marshland, past the battered bridge,
One of a hundred grains untimely sown,
Here, with his comrades of the hard-won ridge,
He rests, unknown.

His horoscope had seemed so plainly drawn—
School triumphs, earned apace in work and play ;
Friendships at will ; then love's delightful dawn
And mellowing day.

Home fostering hope ; some service to the State ;
Benignant age ; then the long tryst to keep
Where in the yew-tree shadow congregate
His fathers sleep.

Was here the one thing needful to distil
From life's alembic, through this holier fate,
The man's essential soul, the hero will ?
We ask ;[!]_; and wait.

THE MARQUESS OF CREWE

A REQUIEM.

WHEN the red storms of Death shall cease,
And on each Belgic plain
We note the fruitful year's increase
By waves of golden grain,
And watch once more old scenes of peace
In ravaged field or fane ;
What voice from your ensanguined bed
Shall wake your lives, ye glorious Dead ?

Though now in Belgic grave concealed,
And bathed in bloody dew,
How bounteous is the harvest's yield
From seeds broadcast by you,
Who fought and died from Zutphen field
Till stedfast Waterloo !
'Neath Sidney's captaincy ye bled,
Who fell by Mons, unnumbered Dead !

From age to age your legions came,
Chivalric, true, and brave,
To fight for Freedom and for Fame,
And Britain's cause to save :
Your battleground was still the same,
The Belgic soil your grave :
Your Marlborough's glory crowns each head
Laid low but late, illustrious Dead !

From many a far self-governed sphere,
Where other stars control
The changes of th' inverted year,
Men make your tombs their goal ;
Till, by your blood united here
In cause and heart and soul,
All sons of Liberty are led
To form one realm, imperial Dead !

W. J. COURTHOPE

SEED.

I.

THIS was the garden of Eden—
That truer Eden whither climb
Earth's progeny from primal slime :
Eden which they with blessed sweat
Perfect and make more perfect yet.
There were no fields like Belgium's fields
In all the world, no great glad yields
Like hers, and no such spoils of tilth
Well won with forehead's fruitful spilth.
She had the secrets of our Earth
And brought prodigious crops to birth.
She gave unto the giving soil
Love, patience, and perpetual toil,
Nor less with fertile heat sustained
To keep the Mother's strength undrained ;
And most, 'twas work of son, not thrall :
Their heritage was free to all !

II.

We to whom she shone example
Now have seen her beacon quenched,
Seen her sworn defender trample
All her seed-lands delved and trenched.
We have seen her sworn defender,
Killer of the cause he claims,
Ravage Earth's Belovèd, rend her,
Reap her care-wrung crops with flames.
Hath indictment plainer pages ?
Amplify know him by his fruit,
Where the increase of slow ages,
Locust-eaten, lapses brute ;
Where the very child of culture,
Where the Enna-rapt of Earth,
Pluto-prey and prey of vulture,
Leaves the land to dole and dearth !

III.

Arise we, then,
 With seed-wealth in our hands,
 Enter these erstwhile crop-crammed lands
 Become a butcher's pen—
 For us become a desert and a den—
 Go we as worshippers unto her shrine
 And pour libations to her !
 Go we and plant an Eden even truer,
 More radiant and divine !
 Go we with seedlings which she gave
 Her own to save !—
 For, stooping low in long discipleship
 To Earth, she breathed the lesson, lip to lip,
 Of Liberty. Thence stood she forth,
 Time's vaward of the north,
 Flinging 'twixt us and the huge onset's hack
 Her own flesh pierced and scored,
 While we drew sword
 And deep free breath to parry and attack.
 So, had not she
 Been beaten to the knee,
 Bent and half broken had been France and we,
 Whom she entrenched 'gainst that impetuosity.
 Her desolation cries the foe's crabbed fruits :
 Then let her know
 Our longing, deep to sow
 Indebtedness, by veritable roots
 And seeds of England planted.
 Her quick womb-wasted land
 Replenish we, and with no niggard hand
 But prodigal acclaim of privilege granted.

IV.

Say not, " We sow our lives,
 We reap a later harvest for her.
 Sure as our sure cause thrives,
 Pelf shall the humbled harrower pour her."

He shall, 'tis meet, 'tis sure,
Be mine-slave chained to yield her treasure.
But must the land endure,
Brimming till then the martyr's measure ?

'Tis meet we make all speed
Lest death take root ere reparation.
The land cries now for seed :
Sweeter, more swift, friends' germination !

V.

Seeds !
Seeds from the land that has sown
The world with Liberty, grandly growing !
Seeds for the land that is sowing
Splendours of destiny, deeds now strowing,
Pollen on bugles blown !
Seed has been lent to our frost-free lands
By Earth's preserving, fostering hands,
That on her the sap of our spring makes free,
Delivered from winter's bands,
We may lavish it. Learn, this is Earth's decree !
For equal children of her are we,
And one is made strong
To right the wrong
Dealt the most fair of her progeny.
(From Earth comes this my seed
To raise a harvest to her daughter's need !)
O England, never more your seed be blest
Save you obey with bounty Earth's behest !
Set you once more before your eyes
Her best example,
Ampler and yet more ample !
Garb her, oh, re-endue
With loveliness of green leaves leaping through,

SEED.

With glory of gold corn beneath blue skies,
With all your seeds possess
Of pregnant potency for fruitfulness,—
With seed, with veritable seed,
Where naked and ravaged the red clods bleed !
Glowingly, lovingly say you,
“ This land that was desolate
Shall become like the garden of Eden anew ! ”

WILFRID BLAIR

TO BELGIUM.

IF human souls, as poets love to sing,
Grow stronger, purer, through great suffering ;
How fair a dawn when this deep night is past
Shall crown brave Belgium's agony at last !
From her dead self a greater soul shall rise
Born of the beauty suffering sanctifies.

WILLIAM AKERMAN

TO GENERAL LEMAN

(The Heroic Defender of Liège.)

LEMAN, brave Leman ! How the mind exults
At such a feat as thine, heroic soul !
As calm within the mighty fortress, thou
Didst challenge Death thy spirit to control !
No fear hadst thou, 'mid storm of shot and shell,
When war's stern blast arose and on thee fell !

'Twas Duty, and thy country's noble cause,
Which nerved thee still to brave the utmost ire
Of legions that had deemed no power could stand
'Tween Paris and their awful line of fire !
Yet they knew not Liège, nor yet knew thee,
Who thought to win such easy victory !

For such as thou art brought disaster near
To plans which long conceived, ripen'd apace,
And stayed awhile the onward rush of foes
Who cared for conquest more than for their race !
Yea, time alone may gauge what thou hast done,
And nations praise thee while the ages run !

JOHN R. PALMER

LIÈGE.

(August, 1914.)

THE greatest war that man has ever known !
The mind declines to grasp the huge array
From frontier to far-spread frontier thrown,
That waits the signal but to fight and slay.

And we who strove for peace, but strove in vain,
Yet knew the moment when to grasp the sword,
Shall show the world how well we still maintain
That mighty prowess deeds of old record.

The clouds have gathered ! Round the seat of war
The heavy darkness moves and rolls and shifts,
While Nations wait in sudden, silent awe—
Await the news when that great darkness lifts.

But in the heart of that vast gloomy cloud
Is seen a name as luminous as day—
“ Liège ! ”—the Nations cry the name aloud—
“ The gallant town that never knew dismay ! ”

All praise to thee, Liège, who held the way
While France and England massed their eager host ;
Men's sons shall tell how Belgium held at bay
The German war-machine—the War Lord's boast.

For there upon that fateful battle eve
The time was then assigned for Europe's fate :
And can we doubt the issue, who believe
In our just cause ? We fight to conquer—Wait !

R. M. INGERSLEY

THE TAKING OF THE GUNS AT MONS.

*(The charge of the 9th Lancers at the Battle of Mons, Sunday,
August 23, 1914.)*

IT is of the British Lancers,
The gallant "Ninth," I sing,
And to those sons of England brave,
My little tribute bring,
And in verse do tell the story,
How gallant Britain's sons,
At Mons, the Teuton put to rout,
And silenced, there, the guns—

'Leven cannon were in ambush,
And Germans there did lay,
Intent, with hellish iron hail,
The British troops to slay ;
The bugle sounded for the charge—
The Lancers, with a smile,
'Midst hail of shrapnel and of lead,
Rode forward, a full mile.

Thro' infantry that barr'd their course,
Fiercely they held their way,
In vain it was the Teuton tried
Britannia's sons to stay ;
Still on they rode, that gallant band,
Heroes of noble cause,
They reached their quarry and there slew
The Foe 'neath cannon's jaws.

The gunners slain, the guns made dumb
(Not one was let remain),
'Midst fire of rifle and of shel'
Rode they then back again ;—
That deed shall live in ages yet,
History's page upon,
Recorded e'er, the story there,
Of that brave charge at Mons.

HENRI M. LÉON

LOUVAIN.

TO DOM BRUNO DESTRÉE, O.S.B.)

I.

IT was the very heart of Peace that thrilled
In the deep minster-bell's wide-throbbing sound
When over old roofs evening seemed to build
Security this world has never found.

Your cloister looked from Cæsar's rampart, high
O'er the fair city : clustered orchard-trees
Married their murmur with the dreaming sky.
It was the house of love and living peace.

And there we talked of youth's delightful years
In Italy, in England. Now, O Friend,
I know not if I speak to living ears
Or if upon you too is come the end.

Peace is on Louvain ; dead peace of spilt blood
Upon the mounded ashes where she stood.

II.

But from that blood, those ashes there arose
Not hoped-for terror cowering as it ran,
But divine anger flaming upon those
Defamers of the very name of man,
Abortions of their blind hyena-creed,
Who for " protection " of their battle-host
Against the unarmed of them they had made to bleed,
Whose hearts they had tortured to the uttermost
Without a cause, past pardon, fired and tore
The towers of fame and beauty, while they shot
And butchered the defenceless in the door.
But history shall hang them high, to rot
Unburied, in the face of times unborn,
Mankind's abomination and last scorn.

LAURENCE BINYON

LOUVAIN.

HAS History a direr deed to show
Than this ? Rests any darker, deadlier stain
On Attila's renown ? Was Tamburlaine
To anguish'd humankind a fiercer foe
Than Germany's mad war-lord ? Blow on blow,
He overtops the iniquities of Spain,
Outdoes the branded crimes of Alva's reign,
And drags his country's glory low, how low !
The world looks on appalled : and not alone
We mortals—shuddering gaze the mighty dead.
Luther, Kant, Goethe, Bach, and Beethoven
Ask " Are these Germans ? Nay, then, we disown
Our kinship with a breed reversive-bred,
Who war on arts and learning. We were Men."

WILLIAM ARCHER

THE SACK OF LOUVAIN.

HE, who profess yourselves allies
Of God who thunders in the deep ;
Who rolls the stars across the skies
And shuts the flowers in sleep.

Ye, who profess yourselves akin
To Attila's all-conquering hordes :
Huns ! that baptismal name of sin
Sullies your souls and stains your swords.

Ye, who profess to hold the key
Of culture, fiefs of learning's crown :
Kinsmen of Goethe ! How would he
Have watched the flames of Louvain town ?

Your poet-king, who loved Voltaire,
Who spared no lives and salved no heart,
Frederick at least vouchsafed to spare
The storied monuments of art.

Recall ye how the Paynim rout
Set Alexandria's pile aflame,
Invoking with triumphant shout
The Prophet's Book and Allah's name ?

These and the hordes that ravished Rome,
Blind fiends with frenzied souls were they,
For deeds like theirs the curse comes home :
Ye Goths and Vandals of to-day !

HENRY BIRKHEAD

LOUVAIN.

("A crime for which there can be no atonement.")

LOUVAIN has perished. Let her lie
With green fields girdled round :
Peace deep and sweet upon her breast,
Unmoved by sight or sound.


Let sun and rain and healing Time
Build her eternal grave :
In hearth and cloister, church and hall,
Trees root and grasses wave :

Till, rising from that Plain of Tears,
Death's image crouches vast,
The Warder of the silent streets,
The Keeper of the Past.

Louvain has fallen. Let her rest
In Belgium's land of fame :
To us a Shrine—to the Ostrogoth
A Monument of Shame.

D. PITKETHLY SAUNDERS

MARIE OF LOUVAIN.

 NE of the band of little waifs
That still our homestead fills,
Her frightened heart found sanctuary
Beneath the Sussex hills ;

Yet could not take our yearning love,
Our toys before her set,
It seemed her timid eyes beheld
Some haunting horror yet.

A brutal blade had scarred her wrist—
And God knows what her heart—
She did not weep, but still and pale
The child-face grieved apart.

Till, one day, Dick, the woodman's son,
Home, wounded, from the war,
Came limping in to see, he said,
"What sort these kiddies are."

She sprang up, at the khaki form
One eager glance she cast,
Then—"Bittish! Bittish!" Marie cried,
And flew and held him fast.

And weeping, laughing, murmuring words
We could not understand,
She nestled till she fell asleep
Still clinging to his hand.

Ah, Dick, and all your plucky pals,
You win a double crown
That friend the weak and fiercely strike
Their murdering foeman down.

HABBERTON LULHAM

TO QUENTIN MATSYS.

(BORN AT LOUVAIN.)

WHAT bitter grief would thy strong soul have
known

To see this erstwhile peaceful plot of earth,
Louvain, whose pride it was to give thee birth,
Shattered and ash-strewn, all its peace now flown,
And all its ancient glories overthrown,

Trampled upon with foul and ghastly mirth
By those who war on all the sacred worth
And beauty that have with the ages grown.

But deep within the heart of Belgium gleams
That fine creative spirit which was thine,
Who wrought with stubborn metals—blended dreams
With all thy gifts of colouring divine.
Thus, by thy great ensample, once again
From wreck shall rise a glorified Louvain!

R. M. INGERSLEY

TERMONDE.

IN Termonde town, still quaking from the bellow
Of war's mad herd—'mid ruin on ruin piled,
A stranger found a shrine, not all defiled,
Of Art's old sculptured glories without fellow ;
And there—while Autumn's banners rustled yellow—
High above seas of desolation isled,
Unbruised, unmarred, with her unwounded child,
Leaned a serene Madonna of Donatello.
O'er a fledged Hermes, lord of speed and spoil,
O'er the vast throes of the Laocoon,
And Milo's lurking marble smile, she shone :
Throned above pillage, and agony's serpent-coil,
And carnal charms that fever and embroil,
Motherhood, scatheless, lived divinely on !

WILLIAM WATSON

THE FALL OF ANTWERP.

(OCTOBER 9, 1914.)

PROUD have we been of many things of late :
Not least of this, that when to sudden flame
Our veiled foe's envy flashed and challenge came,
Not for one instant did we hesitate
Or dream of paltry bargainings with Fate ;
Proud were we, too, that Freedom, crying shame,
Should give to us to crush in her great name
A robber nation drunk with greed and hate.

But Antwerp fallen ! Can we be proud that though
Not ours from Belgium to avert the pain
Of fierce invasion, later griefs to her
Might have been spared but that when long ago
Warnings found voice again and yet again,
We who had ears to hear refused to hear.

W. G. HOLE

A NONCOMBATANT.

(When the Germans entered the Belgian town of Visè they ordered the Postmaster to send telegrams to assist them. He refused, and was shot.)

NOT his the joy of War,
When knee to knee the serried squadrons ride,
Or when, from far,
The cruiser marks her prey, Death's chosen bride.

Not his the strength and cheer
Of comradeship, unto the gate of Death,
That thrusts back fear,
And sudden anguish of intaken breath.

Alone and silently,
Facing the sneering rifles' sullen hate,
He sank into that Sea
Whose billows hide the Undistinguished Great.

O unforgotten dead,
Whose life was schemed on no heroic plan,
Outlasting stone and lead
Your simple epitaph—"This was a Man."

R. K. RISK

YPRES.

WITH flesh and blood, and heart and soul,
Our Empire has been made,
And the pillars are its heroes,
Whose deeds will never fade.

Among our Empire Builders great
Of past and present fame,
The glorious First South Staffords
Again have "played the game."

In noble Belgium's bloodstained land,
Laid waste by fire and sword,
These soldiers checked the savage hosts
Of Germany's War Lord.

At Ypres, against o'erwhelming odds,
Amid the fiercest fight,
They bravely sacrificed their lives,
A shameful wrong to right.

And though their slaughtered bodies oft
Have strewn the battlefield,
Their spirit lives, unconquered still,
Its power again to wield.

FLORENCE CLEE

THE LILIES AND THE ROSE.

THE meteor flag of England
Flies high o'er land and sea
And dazzles every foeman's brand—
Emblem of victory !
The myriad Huns from castled Rhine,
Like a winter mountain stream,
Have surged where none might dream,
But Rose and Lilies' dewy gleam
Now combine.

Past towers of Liège Huns pour,
Past bastioned Namur, too :
They sweep in all the pride of war
To 'whelm the British few ;
At Mons they meet the Teutons o'er the brine,
And the Britons' lifted lance
Wreathed in glory in old France,
And the dread Huns look askance
At our line.

Sing " Roman " of the Rose,
Strike the lyre of Blondel :
Pluck the conquering bay that grows
Where the old knights fought so well ;
Sing Crecy and sing Poitiers, Agincourt,
Sing the men who fought at Mons,
'Gainst the myriad myrmidons,
Beating back the furious Huns—
Troubadour !

Cambrai and Saint Quentin,
And the wide champaign of Gaul,
In one white light are blent in,
Long as valour shall enthrall !
For they met the German cannonade,
Met in horse-fight's clang,
Met the flower of the Bans,
And the Huns' wild armies' vans,
In their raid.

THE LILIES AND THE ROSE.

The War by the six rivers,
Battle-weeks by Marne and Aisne,
While Autumn's wind there quivers,
Shall Rose and Lilies twine ;
When Britain stretched her mighty arm o'er sea,
And her sons devoted gave
Life their native land to save,
By the trench or on the wave,—
True to thee.

In bight and bay there towers
O'er the grey Northern Main
Our grey fleet, watching hours
To Nelson's deathless strain ;
And Jellicoe shall break the red Huns' line,
When each cruiser meets the foe,
And the British thunders flow,
Then to us the palm shall go
Of the brine.

Then here's to Britain's glory :
Thistle, Shamrock, Leek and Rose ;
In her long golden story
See Power in Mercy close,
For English hearts are true to Freedom,
Right, and law ;
And the changing strands of time,
And the tyrant's blazoned crime,
Shall but seal our faith sublime,
Evermore.

NORMAN W. SIBLEY

THE IRON SWALLOW IN FLANDERS.

THE AEROPLANE IN WAR.

THE Iron Swallow—

See how it swims or floats, walking the air,
A thing most fleet and wonderful and fair ;
Great armies follow
Its leading, as it climbs the heaven's blue stair.
About it shot and shell
Rage harmless round, a hurricane of hell.

It shakes and shivers
At many a shock, but oars the subject wind
Which to set purpose it doth bravely bind ;
Across red rivers
It swoops and baffled thunders roar behind ;
Upon its glorious wings
It carries might, the messages of kings.

The Iron Swallow—

All eyes and ears to thousands forth it goes ;
Joy to its friends and terror to its foes ;
Over hill and hollow
It glances, heedless of grim earthquake throes.
Amid the leaden storm
It takes its path, a proud and gallant form.

Along the edges
Of curving clouds or in the rush of rain,
It sometimes trembles, as a spirit in pain ;
Or where deep wedges,
Carved by the sword, yield to infernal strain.
Beyond brute wrath and wrack
It travails, on its dim predestined track.

The Iron Swallow—

Along the lightning's way, its fellow soul,
It reads the battle mystery clear and whole ;
Though armies wallow
Beneath in bloody mire, it finds a goal.
A playmate still of death,
It gives the gravelike void a living breath.

Pilgrim of spaces

Uncharted and unbridged aloft it flies,
And momentarily in danger's bosom dies ;
But from the embraces
Mortal it bursts, to dare new agonies.
Above barbaric force,
See its lone, lovely, inevitable course.

F. W. ORDE WARD

THE BELGIAN WAR DOG.

NOT least the Belgian war dog by his gun
Shares with his brother man the shock and toil,
The alternate burdens of the moon and sun
And those red streams which for their country run ;
For him more labour is the only spoil,
Guarding the lamp that burns a blessed oil
The inextinguishable light with life begun,
Kindling to joy's clear flame war's iron coil.
Fearless and faithful, see, amidst the rain
And roar of battle with its shot and shell,
He holds the post of danger he serves well ;
What of the unending weariness and pain,
The wounds that prizes are, the stress and strain,
To one who makes for man a heaven of hell ?

With conscious pride he feels stern duty's call
Borne on its cosmic current, as he goes
Embodied fire against his nation's foes,
A grateful comrade and no grudging thrall ;
Thrilled by a common purpose, one with all,
He takes as honours bruises grim or blows
And counts no suffering loss or idle woes,
Come life or death, whatever issue falls.
He flies, advances, loyal to the last,
Bound up with Belgium's pitiable need ;
By many a glorious bond and gallant deed ;
Content with heroes yet to fight or fast
And bear the lot of patience on him cast,
The place of peril and the watchful heed.

F. W. ORDE WARD

A HYMN OF PRAYER IN WAR-TIME.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF MARGUERITE COPPIN, POET LAUREATE
OF BELGIUM.)



God of weeping wives and mothers,
Great Father of the fatherless !
Help us to pity foes with brothers,
Sad failure, or as sad success !
Fill up for us our empty places :
Let our great Dead before us rise,
Dim shapes august, with fearless faces
Haloed and crowned with sacrifice.

Give us, Almighty ! faith to guess Thee,
Accept Thy hidden purpose here ;
Strong in our innocence to bless Thee,
And fear no ill, since Thou art near !
Poor refugees in Thy safe keeping,
Thy word sustains us in the wild :
Lord, bid us trust Thy care unsleeping
As in the father trusts the child !

All-Wise art Thou and Everlasting ;
Thou seest all our path of pain.
Give us to see, through clouds o'ercasting,
How Love leads man, the blind and vain !
Help us to smile when storms are nearing,
When skies are dim and stars have set ;
To whisper, doubting not nor fearing,
" God guides both kings and peoples yet."

And when we tell the victor's story,
O, Living God on whom we call,
Give most, that nought may dim its glory,
The Love triumphant over all !
To fallen foes true hands of healing
Hold we,—still humble in our pride,
Upon our heroes' grave-mounds kneeling,
On that dear soil for which they died.

S. GERTRUDE FORD

PEACE.

LIKE hungry gulls, the shrapnel cries
Over the trenches lean and long—
Oh, look!—a blossoming of the skies,
A light of love, a rain of song!

The lips of Christ are stricken dumb.
The cannon's mouth is never still,
And yet the patient angels come
And sing of peace and God's good-will.

Does no one pause? Does no one pray?
Does no one hide his face and weep?
Has no one time on Christmas Day
A little tryst with Heaven to keep?

A shell flies home . . . the vapour clears:
God make the song before it cease
To darkening eyes, to dulling ears,
A glimmer of light, a whisper of peace.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE

PART II.

BEFORE THE GREAT WAR.

LA BRABANÇONNE.

(THE BELGIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM, COMPOSED DURING THE
REVOLUTION OF 1830.)

THE years of slavery are over :
 Raised from the tomb, hear Belgium claim
 The spoils that courage can recover,
 Her banner, privilege, and name.
And in your hands, supreme and daring,
 O people who, henceforth, are free,
Scroll on the ancient flag you're bearing,
 " The King, the Law, and Liberty."

On your untiring march proceeding
 From victory unto victory go ;
The God of Belgium, always heeding,
 On valour doth His grace bestow.
Work on, and show your pastures owning
 Proof of your toil abundantly ;
Let splendour of your hearts be crowning
 " The King, the Law, and Liberty."

Brothers, our outspread arms inviting,
 For us the too long discord ends ;
Belgians, Batavians, truce to fighting,
 The peoples who are free are friends.
Stronger and firmer let us tether
 The bonds of our fraternity,
Proclaiming side by side together
 " The King, the Law, and Liberty."

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Mother, to whom our love is owing,
Our hearts, our lives, to thee we give;
For thee, dear land, our blood is flowing;
We swear thou shalt for ever live.
Majestic, beauteous, dying never
In thine unconquered unity,
For ever this thy boast, for ever,
"The King, the Law, and Liberty."

PERCY ADDLESHAW

SIR HUGH AND THE SWANS.

(KUNG VON DER ROSEN. BRUGES, 1488.)

THE wintry nights in Flanders
Lie thick about the grass ;
We stole between the sentinels,
They never saw us pass.

The mist was blue on field and fen,
And ridged the dykes with white ;
The camp-fires of the soldiers
Burned holes into the night.

They could not see us through the mirk :
We saw them in the glow.
A price was on our either head
And stealthy did we go.

We crept along the inner banks
Close to the waters grey—
We reached the castle at dawn, the castle
Where Max in prison lay.

(We blew the golden trumpets all
For joy, a year ago :
“ Long live the King o’ the Romans ! ”
The people cried as one.

Now, for the king in prison,
There’s two will dare to die.
There’s Hugh o’ the Rose, the Jester,
Sir Hugh o’ the Rose, and I.)

We came upon the castle moat
As the dawn was weak and grey :
“ There’s still an hour,” quoth Hugh o’ the Rose
“ An hour till break of day.

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

“ Give me the files, the muted files,
Give me the rope to fling ;
I’ll swim to the prison window,
And hand them to the king.

“ I’ll swim to the castle and back, Sir John,
Before the morn is light,
And we’ll both lie hid i’ the rushes here
Till we take the boat to-night.”

We tied the files, we tied the rope,
In a little leather sack.
Sir Hugh struck off from the mirky bank,
The satchel on his back.

I watched him cleave the wan water—
A bold swimmer was he.
My heart beat high in my bosom,
For I thought the king was free.

I watched him shoot the middle stream
And reach the other side—
“ Fling up the rope,” the king cried out—
That never should have cried.

The sun uprist beyond the dyke :
It was a deadly gleam.
The startled swans that sleep i’ the moat
Began to whirl and scream.

Woe’s me, that saw them stretch their necks
And hiss, as traitors do ;
I saw them arch their evil wings
And strike and stun Sir Hugh.

The king looked out o’ the window bars,
And he was sad belike ;
But I could not see my lord the king
For the drowned face in the dyke.

SIR HUGH AND THE SWANS.

The sleepy warders woke and stirred,
 " The swans are mad in the moat ! "
I lifted up Sir Hugh o' the Rose
 And laid him in the boat.

I made him a sark of rushes,
 With stones at the feet and head. . . .
In the deepest dyke of Flanders
 Sir Hugh o' the Rose lies dead.

A. MARY F. ROBINSON

CAPTAIN ORTIS' BOOTY.

(A STORY OF ANTWERP.)

CAPTAIN ORTIS (the tale I tell
Petit told in his chronicle)
Gained from Alva, for service and duty
At Antwerp's capture, the strangest booty.

Then each captain chose, as I hear,
That for guerdon he held most dear,
Craved what in chief he set heart of his on :
Out strode Ortis, and claimed . . . the prison !

Such a tumult ! for, be assured,
Greatly the judges and priests demurred ;
No mere criminals alone in that Stygian
Darkness died, but the foes of religion.

There lay heretics by the score,
Anabaptists, and many more,
Hard to catch ! to let loose, when caught, your
Timid hares, to forego the torture—

Folly ! Suddenly sank the noise.
Alva spoke in his steely voice :
“ He's my soldier, sans flaw or blemish ;
Let him burn as he likes these Flemish.”

“ Sire, as you please,” the govenor said,
“ Only King Philip's edict read—”
“ Alva spoke ! What is king or Cortes ?
“ Open the portals,” cried Captain Ortis.

“ Loose the prisoners, set them free.
Only—each pays a ransom-fee ! ”
Out, be sure, poured the gold in buckets,
Piles on piles of broad Flanders ducats.

Ay, there followed not gold alone ;
Men and women and children, thrown
In chains to perish, came out forgiven—
Saw light, friends' faces, and thought it Heaven.

Out they staggered, so halt and blind
From rack and darkness, they scarce could find
The blessed gate where daughter and mother,
Father and brother, all found each other.

" Freedom ! Our darlings ! Let God be praised ! "
So cried all ; then said one, amazed,
" Who is he, under Heaven, that gave us
Thought and pity ? Who cared to save us ? "

" Captain Ortis " (the answer ran),
" The Spanish Lancer ; here's the man.
Ay, but don't kill him with too much caressing ;
Death's a sour salad with sweetest dressing."

Danger, indeed ; for never hath been
In brave old Antwerp such a scene.
Boldest patriot, fairest woman,
Blessing him, knelt to the Spanish foeman.

Ortis looted his prize of gold,
And yet, I think, if the truth be told,
He found, when the ducats were gone with the pleasure,
That heretic blessing a lasting treasure.

Yet my captain, to certain eyes,
Seems war-hardened and worldly-wise.
" 'Twere, for a hero," you say, " more handsome
To give the freedom, nor take the ransom."

True : but think of this hero's lot.
No Quixote he, nor Sir Launcelot,
But a needy soldier, half-starved, remember,
With cold and hunger that northern December ;

THE GLORY OF BELGIUM.

Just such an one as Parma meant
When he wrote to Philip in discontent—
“ Antwerp must yield to our men ere much longer,
Unless you leave us to die of hunger.

“ Wages, clothing, they do without,
Wine, fire even ; they’ll learn, no doubt,
To live without meat for their mouths—they’re zealous ;
Only they die first as yet, poor fellows.”

Yes, and I praise him, for my part,
This man war-beaten and tough of heart,
Who, scheming a booty, no doubt, yet planned it
More like a hero, I think, than a bandit.

What ! My friend is too coarse for you ?
Will nought less than a Galahad do ?
Rough and ready this soldier-sort is ;
Well—*half* a hero was Captain Ortis !

A. MARY F. ROBINSON

THE SCENERY OF FLANDERS.

FROM "BLIND LOVE" ("FLEMISH TALES").

(Part of the following extract recalls forcibly a fine painting by Hobbema of a long, tree-bordered road. Near this scene is a lonely inn, its one occupant a girl cursed by loathsome deformity and shunned by all, but gifted with a divine voice. At last, when a blind beggar and musician passes the inn, the story draws to its inevitable close. Love's wondrous ways are the keynote of the poem.)

I.

LEAGUE after league the level road runs on—
A shining ribbon in the light of day,
In the still moonlight, spectral, mystic, wan,
In chill November, a long stretch of grey,
In June, a white, interminable way,
In March, a course where rough winds run their race ;
From what charmed distance came it ? Who shall say ?
Where goeth it ? To what mist-haunted place ?
Who passed along it last with slow and plodding pace ?

II.

Begun on the remote horizon-line,
On the remote horizon-line 'twill end ;
'Twas born where the suns rise incarnadine,
'Twill die where the large yellow moons descend ;
Like Time, it doth a weary journey wend ;
From Nowhere came it—into Anywhere
It goes. To some it is a pleasant friend ;
To some, a symbol of life's long despair ;
To some, a prison-beat ; to some, a path of air.

III.

Monotonous and mournful—on each side
Tall poplar-trees at intervals are set,
Where the wind-demons in sad eventide
Rehearse among the boughs their loud regret,
Or some hushed joy whose spirit haunts them yet ;
Monotonous and mournful—the canal
Reflects them in its stream of green and jet.
The trees move on with chants catholical,
As pilgrims walk and sing at some high festival.

IV.

They are the pilgrim-hopes of the poor folk
Who live along the white and weary road ;
Dumb beasts of burden, harnessed to the yoke
Of toil, their manhood broken with its load ;
Stung into life by poverty's sharp goad.
They are the pilgrim-hopes of those whose lot
Is ominous with signs that ill forebode ;
Folk of the village, folk o' the lonely cot,
Each tilling, day by day, his life's unyielding plot.

V.

They are the pilgrim-hopes of those who go—
Tramps, beggars, thieves, drovers and pedlars, they—
Upon the dusty highway to and fro ;
The mournful hopes that keep them in their way.
They are the patron-saints to which they pray.
They are the beads of a long rosary
Which the poor folk tell over day by day ;
And often, at the cross-roads, you may spy
A Christ with arms of iron flung wide against the sky.

VI.

They are the guardians of the plains that stretch—
Mournful, monotonous, immense—around ;
Where wheat and barley, turnips, beans and vetch
Wrest a scant living from the skinflint ground.
They are the guardians, and they keep the bound
Of field and paddock, and divide their trust
With the old scarecrows, whose straw heads are crowned
With battered hats, whose ragged garments must
And moulder in the rain, or crumble into dust.

VII.

Dim, unfamiliar deities preside
Over the mournful and monotonous plain :
The windmills with their flapping vans spread wide
Loom menacing amid the bearded grain ;

The church lifts up its spire and flashing vane
From out a nest of ash and alder trees ;
And by the water's edge a giant crane
Stands black against the western flush. With these,
Silence and solitude and the world-wandering breeze.

VIII.

Save when the red wings of a lazy barge
Float slowly down the level water-way,
And the rough steersman, grimy, coarse and large,
Smokes, hour by hour, his pipe of blackened clay ;
He brings them news from Antwerp and Tournay,—
He knows the legends of the Schelde and Lys—
Termonde and Oudenarde, Ypres, Ghent, Courtrai—
Bruges, centuries asleep ; and, if he please,
Can he not tell them stories of the misty seas ?

IX.

For, nor'-nor'-west, the magical, sad seas
Break mournful on a mournful stretch of shore ;
A sandy waste that mocks the name of peace,
Which is but desolation ; where the roar
Of storms is loud, to-day, as long before
These barren plains were summoned from the deep.
The sea, and all its legends, all its lore,
Preserves the dwellers in this land of sleep ;
And o'er their heads sea-winds continually sweep.

X.

Yet, in the silent meadows pleasure dwells
In many a vagrant blossom : pansies hide
In mossy hollows ; violets in the dells
Between the sand-dunes ; water-lilies ride
Upon the slow canals ; and, side by side,
Tall wild-flags watch the waters sauntering by ;
The sun looks down from heaven's pavilion wide,
And skylarks sing clear anthems in the sky—
And sing until poor men forget their poverty.

XI.

And, with the moon, a cool night-odorous charm
Is felt ; an indefinable, sweet sense
Of utter peace—from every night-alarm
A mantle of serene benevolence—
Wraps the poor people of the plains. Immense
Diaphanous shadows pass before the stars,
Celestial ghosts ; and a dim Providence
Closes the heart to all day's noisy jars,
And the glad soul flies forth freed of her earthly bars.

J. REDWOOD-ANDERSON

A PAGEANT AT FURNES.

FROM "IN DE SNOEK" ("FLEMISH TALES").

(The scene of the poem is laid in an old inn in Flanders, and goes as in a vision to Furnes. The typical Flemish company that make "de Snoek" their haunt are fascinatingly true to life. The whole poem displays a certain aspect of life, and the story therein is a striking comment on it. It is a curious tale, and the early love and final tragedy of the decrepit innkeeper and his wife cling to the memory.)

T was at Furnes they met, where every year
There is a proud parade of penitence ;
The pilgrims keep the van, while in the rear
Follows the pageant's vain magnificence.
Each gets a sprig of palm for some few pence
From the old church which Baldwin Bras de Fer
Built as an offering to the ocean ; thence
Barefoot they march around the market-square,
Packed with the tackle, tents and finery of the fair.

First come the penitents, and two by two
They limp along with painful step and slow,
All gowned in black, with white gloves neat and new ;
Each bears a cross—an emblem of his woe ;
A heavy load it looks, yet 'tis not so,
For 'tis but canvas on a lath-work frame ;
Since public penance is but empty show—
And real Remorse cries not aloud her name,
But in the soul's locked room weeps wordless in her
shame.

Then, when the penitents have passed, appears
The pageant : Adam and Eve come in the van
Driven by angels brandishing long spears ;
And next, the ancient Enemy of man,
The Devil, writhing 'neath his snaky ban,
Blazes upon a standard wide unfurled ;
Then, in a long and straggling caravan,
A hundred worthies of the ancient world :
The virtuous Heaven-ward hailed, the vicious Hell-ward
hurled.

Methuselah, and Noah with vine-leaves clad,
David and great Goliath—the first a sling,
The second bears a staff; then, feigning mad,
Nebuchadnezzar, the grass-devouring king;
The Baptist leads a choir of boys that sing
A herald-hymn, with tapers in their hands;
Then, on an ass, and 'neath an angel's wing,
Mary escapes red Herod's blood-stained bands,
And bears the infant Jesus over Egypt's sands.

Next, the Apostles—Judas with a scowl—
The holy men and martyrs—Magdalen
Whose sunny curls escape her sombre cowl;
And Pontius Pilate, most remiss of men,
Followed by Arimathæan Joseph; then
Saint Simon of Cyrene—and a pause
Falls on the hushed crowd of spectators, when
High o'er the thousands that He overawes
Moves on Christ crucified, divinest of outlaws.

And last, preceded by a vested band
Chanting in harmonies of grave accord,
A canopy, with priests on either hand,
Protects the blessèd Body of the Lord;
Knees bend and caps are doffed—God is adored
In sacred silence by the kneeling throng;
God passes and men rise to grace restored;
And after God has passed, with psalm and song,
A hush of holy peace remains for long and long.

Then—when the penitential part is done—
Then starts the business of the day, and night:
From the red setting of the Sunday sun
To the first flush of Monday's mantling light,
The square is mad with mirth and brawl, and bright

With many a torch that from its tent-pole swings ;
And you may see, for money, many a sight !
Calves with two tails—dwarfs—giants—dogs with
wings—
Tragic and comic shows—and other stranger things.

Here whirls a giddy, gaudy roundabout—
A race of horse and ostrich, lion and pig—
The steam-blown organ strives with blare and shout
To drown the noise of the next whirligig.
Thence comes the sound of polka, waltz and jig,
And thence loud laughs, where brown beer freely flows ;
For some there are the cards—for all the swig—
For these the skittle-alley, and for those
Pain-à-la-grecque, ice-creams, hot cakes and *Spéculose*.

And over all moves on the pale, cold moon—
A nun-like face shrined in a hood of cloud,
A nun ecstatic in her cloistral swoon
Forgetful of the clamorous rude crowd ;
Calm from the towers of contemplation, proud
In changeless chastity, her eyes look down
On Bacchus and his pagan revels loud,
Who with an uproar fills the flaring town
That but an hour before assumed the martyr's crown.

Silent and stern, the brave Hôtel de Ville
Looks from its towers and gables on the square ;
Over its roofs the placid moon-rays steal,
Its face is flushed with the red naphtha-flare ;
Silent and stern it stands 'twixt foul and fair—
The fair and foul mixed in its steadfast eyes—
Faced with the eternal choice : the noise and glare
Of Hell—the radiant silence of the skies ;
Silent and stern it stands, the judge of life's assize.

Silent and merciful—a little space
Retired—the church of Baldwin Bras de Fer
Looks on the wild mirth of the market-place ;
Dark in the shadows, red in the red glare,
The door stands open—while in the still air,
White in the placid moon-rays soars the spire.
Silent and merciful, it stoops to share
Shame of the darkness, agony of fire,
Even while it points the goal of life's supreme desire.

J. REDWOOD-ANDERSON

THE SCHELDE.

From "THE HUT BY THE SCHELDE" ("FLEMISH TALES").

(The air of the flat, wild wastes verging on parts of what Oliver Goldsmith calls "the lazy" Schelde is finely caught in this poem. The tragedy surrounding the lonely hut is that of a woman who waits therein for her lover, lost years ago in the great river, till she also is claimed as its prey.)

I.

THE level plains of Flanders sweep away
Unendingly ; from where the sun of day
Comes up to where night's moon goes down—a long,
Sad waste, monotonous as a captive's song.
Faint on the dim horizons, here and there,
A church-spire fades into the quivering air ;
Or, here and there, breasting the sweeping gales,
A windmill stands with ever-whirling sails ;
Now down the green canal a laden barge
Drifts idly, stirring ripples at the marge—
And the tall flags that fringe the water's edge,
The sighing rushes and the whispering sedge,
Sway gently as the water sways below ;
Or, down the long, white highroad, lumbering slow,
A heavy waggon rumbles on its way
Drawn by six huge and glossy stallions, gay
With coloured ribbons ; and the road gives back
The clang of iron-shod hooves, while—crack on crack—
The long, lithe lash descends upon each sweating back.

Life breathes—though all around the plains lie dead ;
Life breathes, and Enterprise lifts up her head ;
Not eager as she is in other lands,
But stubborn, dull, and slow—with heavy hands
Grasping the good she sets before her eyes—
No flaunting bauble, but the solid prize
Of life in ease and plenty ; slow and sure
She seeks on earth only what shall endure.
The dykes are hers—those miles of brick-built mound
That bid old Ocean keep his proper bound ;
She strove with him and conquered—from the main
She seized the polder-flats and gave them to the plain.

II.

And like an artery through the Flemish plains—
An artery whence the inter-crossing veins,
The many-locked canals, draw their life-blood—
The Schelde rolls on his slow, imperious flood.
The Schelde—through whispering banks he takes his way,
Though born an exile, northward toward Tournay
Past Oudenarde, to join the Lys at Ghent ;
Then turning here and there, on pleasure bent,
Flows many a peaceful mile—for he has found
His gentle partner, and a murmured sound
Of sighs and kisses, song and rippled mirth,
Tells where he wanders o'er the flowery earth.
Then past Termonde, till after many a wide
And winding loop, he sees on either side
The towers and spires of Antwerp. There he feels
Upon his heart the weight of many keels ;
And many a tapering mast and spar and rope,
Trembles within him like a new-born hope.
A whisper comes—the whisper of the wild
Wide seas—he thrills, as if an orphan child
Learned suddenly his father lived. A man,
No more a child, westward with widening span,
The river goes ; new hopes, new fears arise,
He sees new countries spread before his eyes ;
As man—he has a man's brave part to play ;
He plays it bravely, and becomes a way
Of many sails—a link with lands afar ;
The gentle path of peace—the sounding road of war.

On, ever-widening, now his wavelets smile
Round Beveland and Tholen—many an isle
And many a sand-bank—Duiveland, Wolfersdyke,
Schouwen and old-time Walcheren ; then, like
The child who finds his father once again,
He flings his two arms wide and clasps the northern main.

J. REDWOOD-ANDERSON

NEAR BRUSSELS: A HALF-WAY PAUSE.

THE turn of noontide has begun.
In the weak breeze the sunshine yields.
There is a bell upon the fields.
On the long hedgerow's tangled run
A low white cottage intervenes:
Against the wall a blind man leans,
And sways his face to have the sun.

Our horses' hoofs stir in the road,
Quiet and sharp. Light hath a song
Whose silence, being heard, seems long.
The point of noon maketh abode,
And will not be at once gone through.
The sky's deep colour saddens you,
And the heat weighs a dreamy load.

D. G. ROSSETTI

ANTWERP TO GHENT.

FROM "A TRIP TO PARIS AND BELGIUM."

WE are upon the Scheldt. We know we move
Because there is a floating at our eyes
Whatso they seek ; and because all the things
Which on our outset were distinct and large
Are smaller and much weaker and quite grey,
And at last gone from us. No motion else.

We are upon the road. The thin swift moon
Runs with the running clouds that are the sky,
And with the running water runs—at whiles
Weak 'neath the film and heavy growth of reeds.
The country swims with motion. Time itself
Is consciously beside us, and perceived.
Our speed is such the sparks our engine leaves
Are burning after the whole train has passed.
The darkness is a tumult. We tear on,
The roll behind us and the cry before,
Constantly, in a lull of intense speed
And thunder. Any other sound is known
Merely by sight. The shrubs, the trees your eye
Scans for their growth, are far along in haze.
The sky has lost its clouds, and lies away
Oppressively at calm : the moon has failed :
Our speed has set the wind against us. Now
Our engine's heat is fiercer, and flings up
Great glares alongside. Wind and steam and speed
And clamour and the night. We are in Ghent.

D. G. ROSSETTI

ANTWERP AND BRUGES.

I CLIMBED the stair in Antwerp church,
What time the circling thews of sound
At sunset seem to heave it round.
Far up, the carillon did search
The wind, and the birds came to perch
Far under, where the gables wound.

In Antwerp harbour on the Scheldt
I stood along, a certain space
Of night. The mist was near my face ;
Deep on, the flow was heard and felt.
The carillon kept pause, and dwelt
In music through the silent place.

John Memmeling and John van Eyck
Hold state at Bruges. In sore shame
I scanned the works that keep their name.
The carillon, which then did strike
Mine ears, was heard of theirs alike :
It set me closer unto them.

I climbed at Bruges all the flight
The belfry has of ancient stone.
For leagues I saw the east wind blown ;
The earth was grey, the sky was white.
I stood so near upon the height
That my flesh felt the carillon.

D. G. ROSSETTI

ON LEAVING BRUGES.

THE city's steeple-towers remove away,
Each singly ; as each vain infatuate Faith
Leaves God in Heaven, and passes. A mere
breath

Each soon appears, so far. Yet that which lay
The first is now scarce further or more grey
Than the last is. Now all are wholly gone.
The sunless sky has not once had the sun
Since the first weak beginning of the day.

The air falls back as the wind finishes,
And the clouds stagnate. On the water's face
The current breathes along, but is not stirred.
There is no branch that thrills with any bird.
Winter is to possess the earth a space,
And have its will upon the extreme seas.

D G. ROSSETTI

“HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS
FROM GHENT TO AIX.”

I.

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he ;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three ;
“ Good speed ! ” cried the watch, as the gate-
bolts undrew ;
“ Speed ! ” echoed the wall to us galloping through ;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

II.

Not a word to each other ; we kept the great pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place ;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

III.

’Twas moonset at starting ; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear ;
At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see ;
At Duffeld, ’twas morning as plain as could be ;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-
chime,
So, Joris broke silence with, “ Yet there is time ! ”

IV.

At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare thro’ the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray.

V.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track ;
And one eye's black intelligence,—ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance !
And the thick heavy spume-flakes which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

VI.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned ; and cried Joris, " Stay
spur !
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix "—for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck and staggering
knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

VII.

So, we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky ;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle bright stubble like chaff ;
Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white
And " Gallop," gasped Joris, " for Aix is in sight ! "

VIII.

" How they'll greet us ! "—and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone ;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

*HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM
GHENT TO AIX.*

IX.

Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer ;
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad
 or good,
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.

X.

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground ;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from
 Ghent.

ROBERT BROWNING

THE LAY OF THE BRAVE CAMERON.

(AT QUATRE BRAS, JUNE 16, 1815.)

AT Quatre Bras, when the fight ran high,
Stout Cameron stood with wakeful eye,
Eager to leap, as a mettlesome hound,
Into the fray with a plunge and a bound.
But Wellington, lord of the cool command,
Held the reins with a steady hand,
Saying, "Cameron, wait, you'll soon have enough—
Give the Frenchmen a taste of your stuff,
When the Cameron men are wanted."

Now hotter and hotter the battle grew,
With tramp, and rattle, and wild halloo,
And the Frenchmen poured, like a fiery flood,
Right on the ditch where Cameron stood.
Then Wellington flashed from his steadfast stance
On his captain brave a lightning glance,
Saying, "Cameron, now have at them, boy,
Take care of the road to Charleroi,
Where the Cameron men are wanted."

Brave Cameron shot like a shaft from a bow
Into the midst of the plunging foe,
And with him the lads whom he loved, like a torrent,
Sweeping the rocks in its foamy current;
And he fell the first in the fervid fray,
Where a deathful shot had shore its way,
But his men pushed on where the work was rough,
Giving the Frenchmen a taste of their stuff,
Where the Cameron men were wanted.

Brave Cameron then, from the battle's roar,
His foster-brother stoutly bore,
His foster-brother with service true,
Back to the village of Waterloo.

THE LAY OF THE BRAVE CAMERON.

And they laid him on the soft green sod,
And he breathed his spirit there to God,
But not till he heard the loud hurrah
Of victory billowed from Quatre Bras,
Where the Cameron men were wanted.

By the road to Ghent they buried him then,
This noble chief of the Cameron men,
And not an eye was tearless seen
That day beside the alley green :
Wellington wept—the iron man !
And from every eye in the Cameron clan
The big round drop in bitterness fell,
As with the pipes he loved so well
His funeral wail they chanted.

And now he sleeps (for they bore him home,
When the war was done, across the foam)
Beneath the shadow of Nevis Ben,
With his sires, the pride of the Cameron men.
Three thousand Highlandmen stood round,
As they laid him to rest in his native ground ;
The Cameron brave, whose eye never quail'd,
Whose heart never sank, and whose hand never fail'd,
Where a Cameron man was wanted.

JOHN STUART BLACKIE

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES.

CARILLON. 1845.

IN the ancient town of Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city,
As the evening shades descended,
Low and loud and sweetly blended,
Low at times and loud at times,
And changing like a poet's rhymes,
Rang the beautiful wild chimes,
From the Belfry in the market
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

Then, with deep sonorous clangour
Calmly answering their sweet anger,
When the wrangling bells had ended,
Slowly struck the clock eleven,
And, from out the silent heaven,
Silence on the town descended.
Silence, silence everywhere,
On the earth and in the air,
Save that footsteps here and there
Of some burgher home returning,
By the street lamps faintly burning,
For a moment woke the echoes
Of the ancient town of Bruges.

But amid my broken slumbers
Still I heard those magic numbers,
As they loud proclaimed the flight
And stolen marches of the night ;
Till their chimes in sweet collision
Mingled with each wandering vision,
Mingled with the fortune-telling
Gipsy-bands of dreams and fancies,
Which amid the waste expanses
Of the silent land of trances
Have their solitary dwelling.
All else seemed asleep in Bruges,
In the quaint old Flemish city.

THE BELFRY OF BRUGES.

And I thought how like these chimes
Are the poet's airy rhymes,
All his rhymes and roundelays,
His conceits, and songs, and ditties,
From the belfry of his brain,
Scattered downward, though in vain,
On the roofs and stones of cities !
For by night the drowsy ear
Under its curtains cannot hear,
And by day men go their ways,
Hearing the music as they pass,
And deeming it no more, alas !
Than the hollow sound of brass.

Yet perchance a sleepless wight,
Lodging at some humble inn
In the narrow lanes of life,
When the dusk and hush of night
Shut out the incessant din
Of daylight and its toil and strife,
May listen with a calm delight
To the poet's melodies,
Till he hears, or dreams he hears,
Intermingled with the song,
Thoughts that he has cherished long ;
Hears amid the chime and singing
The bells of his own village ringing,
And wakes, and finds his slumberous eyes
Wet with most delicious tears.

Thus dreamed I, as by night I lay
In Bruges, at the Fleur-de-Blé,
Listening with a wild delight
To the chimes that, through the night,
Rang their changes from the Belfry
Of that quaint old Flemish city.

IN the market-place of Bruges stands the belfry old
and brown ;
Thrice consumed and thrice rebuilt, still it
watches o'er the town.

As the summer morn was breaking, on that lofty tower
I stood,
And the world threw off the darkness, like the weeds
of widowhood.

Thick with towns and hamlets studded, and with streams
and vapours grey,
Like a shield embossed with silver, round and vast the
landscape lay.

At my feet the city slumbered. From its chimneys, here
and there,
Wreaths of snow-white smoke, ascending, vanished,
ghost-like, into air.

Not a sound rose from the city at that early morning
hour,
But I heard a heart of iron beating in the ancient tower.

From their nests beneath the rafters sang the swallows
wild and high,
And the world, beneath me sleeping, seemed more distant
than the sky.

Then most musical and solemn, bringing back the olden
times,
With their strange, unearthly changes rang the melan-
choly chimes.

Like the psalms from some old cloister, when the nuns
sing in the choir ;
And the great bell tolled among them, like the chanting
of a friar.

Visions of the days departed, shadowy phantoms filled
my brain ;
They who live in history only seemed to walk the earth
again ;

All the Foresters of Flanders,—mighty Baldwin Bras de
Fer,
Lyderick du Bucq and Cressy, Philip, Guy de Dampierre.

I beheld the pageants splendid, that adorned those days
of old ;
Stately dames, like queens attended, knights who bore
the Fleece of Gold ;

Lombard and Venetian merchants with deep-laden
argosies ;
Ministers from twenty nations ; more than royal pomp
and ease.

I beheld proud Maximilian, kneeling humbly on the
ground ;
I beheld the gentle Mary, hunting with her hawk and
hound ;

And her lighted bridal chamber, where a duke slept with
the queen,
And the armèd guard around them, and the sword
unsheathed between.

I beheld the Flemish weavers, with Namur and Juliers
bold,
Marching homeward from the bloody battle of the Spurs
of Gold ;

Saw the fight at Minnewater, saw the White Hoods
moving West,
Saw great Artevelde victorious scale the Golden Dragon's
nest ;

And again the whiskered Spaniard all the land with
terror smote ;
And again the wild alarum sounded from the tocsin's
throat ;

Till the bell of Ghent responded o'er lagoon and dike of
sand,
"I am Roland ! I am Roland ! there is victory in the
land !"


Then the sound of drums aroused me. The awakened
city's roar
Chased the phantoms I had summoned back into their
graves once more.

Hours had passed away like minutes ; and, before I was
aware,
Lo ! the shadow of the belfry crossed the sun-illuminated
square.

H. W. LONGFELLOW

THE EMPEROR'S GLOVE.

"Combien faudrait-il peaux d'Espagne pour faire un gant de cette grandeur?" A play upon the words *gant*, a glove, and *Gand*, the French for Ghent.

 N St. Bavon's tower, commanding
Half of Flanders, his domain,
Charles the Emperor once was standing,
While beneath him on the landing
Stood Duke Alva and his train.

Like a print in books of fables,
Or a model made for show,
With its pointed roofs and gables,
Dormer windows, scrolls and labels,
Lay the city far below.

Through its squares and streets and alleys
Poured the populace of Ghent;
As a routed army rallies,
Or as rivers run through valleys,
Hurrying to their homes they went.

"Nest of Lutheran misbelievers!"
Cried Duke Alva as he gazed;
"Haunt of traitors and deceivers,
Stronghold of insurgent weavers,
Let it to the ground be razed!"

On the Emperor's cap the feather
Nods, as laughing he replies:
"How many skins of Spanish leather,
Think you, would, if stitched together,
Make a glove of such a size?"

H. W. LONGFELLOW

DAYBREAK FROM THE STEEPLE OF THE
CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, GHENT.

FROM "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE."

ARTEVELDE (*alone*). There lies a sleeping city.
God of dreams,
What an unreal and fantastic world
Is going on below!
Within the sweep of yon encircling wall,
How many a large creation of the night,
Wide wilderness and mountain, rock and sea,
Peopled with busy transitory groups,
Finds room to rise, and never feels the crowd!
—If when the shows had left the dreamer's eyes
They should float upward visibly to mine,
How thick with apparitions were that void!
But now the blank and blind profundity
Turns my brain giddy with a sick aversion.
—I have not slept. I am to blame for that.
Long vigils, joined with scant and meagre food,
Must needs impair that promptitude of mind
And cheerfulness of spirit, which in him
Who leads a multitude, is past all price.
I think I could redeem an hour's repose
Out of the night that I have squandered, yet
The breezes, launched upon their early voyage,
Play with a pleasing freshness on my face.
I will enfold my cloak about my limbs
And lie where I shall front them;—here, I think.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

FROM "CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE." CANTO
THE THIRD.

STOP! for thy tread is on an Empire's dust!
An Earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
This first and last of fields! king-making Victory?

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising
knell!

Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet.
But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound, the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;

And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell :
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness ;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated : who would guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise !

And there was mounting in hot haste : the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—" The foe ! they come !
they come ! "

And wild and high the " Camerons' gathering " rose,
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes ;
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills
Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's
ears !

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with Nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if ought inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas !
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array !
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent !

LORD BYRON

FAIR Brussels, thou art far behind,
 Though, lingering on the morning wind,
 We yet may hear the hour
 Peal'd over orchard and canal,
 With voice prolong'd and measured fall,
 From proud Saint Michael's tower ;
 Thy wood, dark Soignies, holds us now,
 Where the tall beeches' glossy bough
 For many a league around,
 With birch and darksome oak between,
 Spreads deep and far a pathless screen
 Of tangled forest ground.
 Stems planted close by stems defy
 The adventurous foot—the curious eye
 For access seeks in vain ;
 And the brown tapestry of leaves,
 Strew'd on the blighted ground, receives
 Nor sun, nor air, nor rain.
 No opening glade dawns on our way,
 No streamlet, glancing to the ray,
 Our woodland path has cross'd ;
 And the straight causeway which we tread
 Prolongs a line of dull arcade,
 Unvarying through the unvaried shade
 Until in distance lost.

A brighter, livelier scene succeeds ;
 In groups the scattering wood recedes,
 Hedge-rows, and huts, and sunny meads,
 And cornfields glance between ;
 The peasant, at his labour blithe,
 Plies the hook'd staff and shorten'd scythe :
 But when these ears were green,
 Placed close within destruction's scope
 Full little was that rustic's hope
 Their ripening to have seen !
 And, lo, a hamlet and its fane—
 Let not the gazer with disdain

LINES FROM "THE FIELD OF WATERLOO."

 Their architecture view ;
For yonder rude ungraceful shrine
And disproportion'd spire are thine,
 Immortal WATERLOO !

Fear not the heat, though full and high
The sun has scorch'd the autumn sky,
And scarce a forest straggler now
To shade us spreads a greenwood bough ;
These fields have seen a hotter day
Than e'er was fired by sunny ray.
Yet one mile on—yon shatter'd hedge
Crests the soft hill whose long smooth ridge

 Looks on the field below,
And sinks so gently on the dale,
That not the folds of Beauty's veil

 In easier curves can flow.
Brief space from thence the ground again,
Ascending slowly from the plain,

 Forms an opposing screen,
Which with its crest of upland ground
Shuts the horizon all around.

 The soften'd vale between
Slopes smooth and fair for courser's tread ;—
Not the most timid maid need dread
To give her snow-white palfrey head
 On that wide stubble-ground ;

Nor wood, nor tree, nor bush is there,
Her course to intercept or scare,
 Nor fosse nor fence is found,
Save where, from out her shatter'd bowers,
Rise Hougomont's dismantled towers.

Far other harvest-home and feast,
Than claims the boor from scythe released,
 On these scorch'd fields were known !
Death hover'd o'er the maddening rout,

And, in the thrilling battle-shout
Sent for the bloody banquet out
 A summons of his own.
Through rolling smoke the Demon's eye
Could well each destined guest espy,
Well could his ear in ecstasy
 Distinguish every tone
That fill'd the chorus of the fray—
From cannon-roar and trumpet-bray,
From charging squadrons' wild hurra,
From the wild clang that mark'd their way—
 Down to the dying groan
And the last sob of life's decay
 When breath was all but flown.

For ten long hours of doubt and dread,
Fresh succours from the extended head
Of either hill the contest fed ;
 Still down the slope they drew,
The charge of columns pausèd not,
Nor ceased the storm of shell and shot ;
 For all that war could do
Of skill and force was proved that day,
And turn'd not yet the doubtful fray
 On bloody Waterloo.

Pale Brussels ! then what thoughts were thine,
When ceaseless from the distant line
 Continued thunders came !
Each burgher held his breath to hear
Those forerunners of havoc near,
 Of rapine and of flame.
What ghâstly sights were thine to meet,
When rolling through thy stately street,
The wounded show'd their mangled plight
In token of the unfinish'd fight,
And from each anguish-laden wain
The blood-drops laid thy dust like rain !

How often in the distant drum
Heard'st thou the fell Invader come,
While Ruin, shouting to his band,
Shook high her torch and gory brand!—
Cheer thee, fair City! From yon stand,
Impatient, still his outstretch'd hand
 Points to his prey in vain,
While maddening in his eager mood,
And all unwont to be withstood,
 He fires the fight again.

But on the British heart were lost
The terrors of the charging host;
For not an eye the storm that view'd
Changed its proud glance of fortitude,
Nor was one forward footstep staid,
As dropp'd the dying and the dead.
Fast as their ranks the thunders tear,
Fast they renew'd each serried square,
And on the wounded and the slain
Closed their diminish'd files again,
Till from their line, scarce spears' lengths three,
Emerging from the smoke they see
Helmet, and plume, and panoply:
 Then waked their fire at once!
Each musketeer's revolving knell
As fast, as regularly fell,
As when they practise to display
Their discipline on festal day;
 Then down went helm and lance!
Down were the eagle banners sent,
Down reeling steeds and riders went,
Corslets were pierced, and pennons rent,
 And, to augment the fray,
Wheel'd full against their staggering flanks
The English horsemen's foaming ranks
 Forced their resistless way.
Then to the musket-knell succeeds

The clash of swords, the neigh of steeds ;
As plies the smith his clanging trade,
Against the cuirass rang the blade ;
And while amid their close array
The well-served cannon rent their way,
And while amid their scatter'd band
Raged the fierce rider's bloody brand,
Recoil'd in common rout and fear
Lancer and guard and cuirassier,
Horsemen and foot, a mingled host,
Their leaders fall'n, their standards lost.

Farewell, sad Field ! whose blighted face
Wears desolation's withering trace ;
Long shall my memory retain
Thy shatter'd huts and trampled grain,
With every mark of martial wrong,
That scathe thy towers, fair Hougomont !
Yet though thy garden's green arcade
The marksman's fatal post was made,
Though on thy shatter'd beeches fell
The blended rage of shot and shell,
Though from thy blacken'd portals torn,
Their fall thy blighted fruit-trees mourn,
Has not such havoc brought a name
Immortal in the rolls of fame ?
Yes, Agincourt may be forgot,
And Cressy be an unknown spot,
And Blenheim's name be new ;
But still in story and in song,
For many an age remember'd long,
Shall live the towers of Hougomont,
And field of Waterloo.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

WATERLOO

*From "Ode : The Morning of the Day Appointed for a
General Thanksgiving, Jan. 18th, 1816."*

HE, who in concert with an earthly string
Of Britain's acts would sing,
He with enraptured voice will tell
Of One whose spirit no reverse could quell
Of One that 'mid the failing never failed—
Who paints how Britain struggled and prevailed
Shall represent her labouring with an eye
Of circumspect humanity ;
Shall show her clothed with strength and skill
All martial duties to fulfil ;
Firm as a rock in stationary fight ;
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam ;
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting at midnight
To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream—
Woe, woe to all that face her in the field !
Appalled she may not be, and cannot yield.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

ON THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

IN storm and tempest arose the day,
Which show'd the foe to view,
Who, vain and impatient for the fray,
Aloud the onset blew ;
And the fight with vengeful ire began,
And the fire in ceaseless thunder ran,
From line to line, and from man to man,
Death's shafts destructive flew.

The hearts were brave, and the bands were strong,
Which hope led to the field,
The fight was fierce, and the strife was long,
And neither host would yield :
When many valorous deeds were done,
And the day by patient prowess won,
Then on England's triumph set the sun,
And the foe could find no shield.

And those who oft for glory fought,
Were doom'd no more to know,
But now, in their speed their safety sought,
And death kept with the slow ;
For a band unwearied in the fight,
By wrongs provoked, pursued their flight,
And many lay, ere the morning's light,
Down on their gorgets low.

Now pity o'er the brave prevail'd,
Who trod the field of gore,
And many a bold heart's mansion hail'd,
To ask if life was o'er :
'Twas long from some choice spirits fled,
And the last chill'd drop some just had bled,
But many maim'd from among the dead,
And off the field, they bore.

And many sigh'd for a comrade lost,
Who had cheer'd his arduous hours ;
And many a weeping fair was cross'd,
By love's disastrous powers ;

ON THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

And yet there beam'd through their grief a pride,
For the envious deaths their heroes died,
Which might have been through tears descried,
Just like the sun in showers.

And the scene shall long fond thoughts renew,
Tho' tears bedim the eye ;
And long, with that field of fame in view,
Shall a Briton's heart beat high,
Who treads the soil where the valiant fell,
And views the mounds which their ashes swell,
And reads the tombs which their glories tell,
In Belgium where they lie.

JOHN JONES

OSTEND.

ON HEARING THE BELLS AT SEA.

HOW sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal !
As when, at opening morn, the fragrant breeze
Breathes on the trembling sense of pale disease,
So piercing to my heart their force I feel !
And hark ! with lessening cadence now they fall !
And now, along the white and level tide
They fling their melancholy music wide ;
Bidding me many a tender thought recall
Of summer-days, and those delightful years,
When from an ancient tower, in life's fair prime,
The mournful magic of their mingling chime
First waked my wondering childhood into tears !
But seeming now, when all those days are o'er,
The sounds of joy once heard and heard no more.

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES

ODE TO A LADY.

ON THE DEATH OF COL. CHARLES ROSS, IN THE
ACTION AT FONTENOY. WRITTEN MAY, 1745.

WHILE, lost to all his former mirth,
Britannia's genius bends to earth,
And mourns the fatal day :
While, stained with blood, he strives to tear
Unseemly from his sea-green hair
The wreaths of cheerful May :

The thoughts which musing pity pays,
And fond remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful hours attend ;
Still fancy, to herself unkind,
Awakes to grief the softened mind,
And points the bleeding friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending wave
His country's vows shall bless the grave,
Where'er the youth is laid :
That sacred spot the village hind
With every sweetest turf shall bind,
And peace protect the shade.

O'er him, whose doom thy virtues grieve,
Aërial forms shall sit at eve,
And bend the pensive head !
And, fallen to save his injured land,
Imperial honour's awful hand
Shall point his lonely bed !

The warlike dead of every age,
Who fill the fair recording page,
Shall leave their sainted rest ;
And, half reclining on his spear,
Each wondering chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming guest :

ODE TO A LADY.

Old Edward's sons unknown to yield.
Shall crowd from Cressy's laurelled field,
And gaze with fixed delight ;
Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish the avenging fight.

If, weak to soothe so soft a heart,
These pictured glories naught impart,
To dry thy constant tear :
If yet, in sorrow's distant eye,
Exposed and pale thou see'st him lie,
Wild war insulting near :

Where'er from time thou court'st relief,
The muse shall still, with social grief,
Her gentlest promise keep ;
Even humble Harting's cottaged vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
And bid her shepherds weep.

WILLIAM COLLINS

LINES
FROM A POEM
ON THE SEAT OF WAR IN FLANDERS,
CHIEFLY WITH RELATION TO THE SIEGES :
(Written in 1710).

HAPPY, thou Flandria, on whose fertile plains,
In wanton pride luxurious plenty reigns ;
Happy ! had heaven bestow'd one blessing more,
And plac'd thee distant from the Gallic power !
But now in vain thy lawns attract the view,
They but invite the victor to subdue :
War, horrid war, the sylvan scene invades,
And angry trumpets pierce the woodland shades ;
Here shatter'd towers, proud works of many an age,
Lie dreadful monuments of human rage ;
There palaces and hallow'd domes display
Majestic ruins, awful in decay !
Thy very dust, though undistinguish'd trod,
Compos'd, perhaps, some hero, great and good,
Who nobly for his country lost his blood !

See ! the Britannic lions wave in air !
See ! mighty Marlborough breathing death and war,
From Albion's shores, at Anna's high commands,
The dauntless hero pours his martial bands.
As when in wrath stern Mars the thunderer sends
To scourge his foes ; in pomp the god descends ;
He mounts his iron car ; with fury burns ;
The car fierce-rattling thunders as it turns ;
Gloomy he grasps his adamant shield,
And scatters armies o'er th' ensanguin'd field :
With delegated wrath thus Marlborough glows,
In vengeance rushing on his country's foes.
See ! round the hostile towers embattled stands
His banner'd host, embodied bands by bands !
Hark ! the shrill trumpet sends a mortal sound,
And prancing horses shake the solid ground ;

LINES FROM "WAR IN FLANDERS."

The surly drums beat terrible afar,
With all the dreadful music of the war ;
From the drawn swords effulgent flames arise,
Flash o'er the plains, and lighten to the skies ;
The heavens above, the fields and floods beneath,
Glare formidably bright, and shine with death ;
In fiery storms descends a murderous shower,
Thick flash the lightnings, fierce the thunders roar.
As when in wrathful mood Almighty Jove
Aims his dire bolts red-hissing from above ;
Through the sing'd air, with unresisted sway,
The forky vengeance rends its flaming way,
And, while the firmament with thunder roars,
From their foundations hurl imperial towers ;
So rush the globes with many a fiery round,
Tear up the rock, or rend the steadfast mound.
Death shakes aloft her dart, and o'er her prey
Stalks with dire joy, and marks in blood her way ;
Mountains of heroes slain deform the ground,
The shape of man half bury'd in the wound :
And lo ! while in the shock of war they close,
While swords meet swords, and foes encounter foes,
The treacherous earth beneath their footsteps cleaves,
Her entrails tremble, and her bosom heaves ;
Sudden in bursts of fire eruptions rise,
And whirl the torn battalions to the skies.

Thus earthquakes, rumbling with a thundering sound,
Shake the firm world, and rend the cleaving ground ;
Rocks, hills, and groves, are tost into the sky,
And in one mighty ruin nations die.

See ! through th' encumbered air the ponderous bomb
Bears magazines of death within its womb ;
The glowing orb displays a blazing train,
And darts bright horror through th' ethereal plain ;
It mounts tempestuous, and with hideous sound
Wheels down the heavens, and thunders o'er the ground :

Th' imprison'd deaths rush dreadful in a blaze,
And mow a thousand lives, a thousand ways ;
Earth floats with blood, while spreading flames arise
From palaces and domes, and kindle half the skies.

Thus terribly in air the comets roll,
And shoot malignant gleams from pole to pole ;
'Tween worlds and worlds they move, and from their hair
Shake the blue plague, the pestilence, and war.

But who is he, who stern bestrides the plain,
Who drives triumphant o'er huge hills of slain ;
Serene, while engines from the hostile tower
Rain from their brazen mouths an iron shower ;
While turbid fiery smoke obscures the day,
Hews through the deathful breach his desperate way ?
Sure Jove descending joins the martial toil ;
Or is it Marlborough, or the great Argyle ?

Ah ! what new horrors rise ? In deep array
The squadrons form ! aloft the standards play !
The captains draw the sword ! on every brow
Determin'd valour lowers ! the trumpets blow !
See ! the brave Briton delves the cavern'd ground
Through the hard entrails of the stubborn mound !
And, undismay'd by death, the foe invades
Through dreadful horrors of infernal shades !
In vain the wall's broad base deep-rooted lies,
In vain an hundred turrets threat the skies !
Lo ! while at ease the bands immur'd repose,
Nor careless dream of subterranean foes,
Like the Cadmæan host, embattled swarms
Start from the earth, and clash their sounding arms,
And pouring war and slaughter from beneath,
Wrap towers, walls, men, in fire, in blood, in death.

WILLIAM BROOME

Lines from "AN ENGLISH BALLAD

ON THE TAKING OF NAMUR,

BY THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, 1695."

(Written in reply to a poem by M. Boileau Despreaux.)

FULL fifteen thousand lusty fellows
With fire and sword the fort maintain :
Each was a Hercules, you tell us ;
Yet out they march'd like common men.
Cannons above, and mines below
Did Death and tombs for foes contrive :
Yet matters have been order'd so,
That most of us are still alive.

If Namur be compar'd to Troy ;
Then Britain's boys excell'd the Greeks :
Their siege did ten long years employ :
We've done our bus'ness in ten weeks.
What godhead does so fast advance,
With dreadful pow'r those hills to gain ?
'Tis little Will,* the scourge of France ;
No godhead but the first of men.
His mortal arm exerts the pow'r,
To keep e'en Mons's victor under :
And that same Jupiter no more
Shall fright the world with impious thunder.

Truth, justice, sense, religion, fame
May join to finish William's story ;
Nations set free may bless his name ;
And France in secret own his glory.
But Ipres, Mastricht and Cambray,
Besançon, Ghent, St. Omer, Lisle,
Courtray and Dole—ye criticks, say,
How poor to this was Pindar's style ?
With eke's and also's tack thy strain,
Great Bard ; and sing the deathless prince,
Who lost Namur the same campaign,
He bought Dixmude, and plunder'd Deynse.

* King William III.

MATTHEW PRIOR

TO VANDYCK.

(Born at Antwerp 1599.)

RARE Artisan, whose pencil moves
Not our delights alone, but loves !
From thy shop of beauty we
Slaves return, that enter'd free.
The heedless lover does not know
Whose eyes they are that wound him so ;
But, confounded with thy art,
Inquires her name that has his heart.
Another, who did long refrain,
Feels his old wound bleed fresh again
With dear remembrance of that face,
Where now he reads new hopes of grace
Nor scorn nor cruelty does find,
But gladly suffers a false wind
To blow the ashes of despair
From the reviving brand of care.
Fool ! that forgets her stubborn look
This softness from thy finger took.
Strange ! that thy hand should not inspire
The beauty only, but the fire ;
Not the form alone, and grace,
But act and power of a face.
Mayst thou yet thyself as well,
As all the world besides, excel !
So you the unfeign'd truth rehearse
(That I may make it live in verse)
Why thou couldst not at one assay
That face to aftertimes convey,
Which this admires. Was it thy wit
To make her oft before thee sit ?
Confess, and we'll forgive thee this ;
For who would not repeat that bliss ?
And frequent sight of such a dame
Buy with the hazard of his fame ?
Yet who can tax thy blameless skill,
Though thy good hand had failèd still,

TO VANDYCK.

When nature's self so often errs ?
She for this many thousand years
Seems to have practised with much care,
To frame the race of women fair ;
Yet never could a perfect birth
Produce before, to grace the earth,
Which waxèd old ere it could see
Her that amaz'd thy art and thee.

But now 'tis done, O let me know
Where those immortal colours grow,
That could this deathless piece compose !
In lilies ? or the fading rose ?
No ; for this theft thou hast climb'd higher
Than did Prometheus for his fire.

EDMUND WALLER

THE PAINTER AND THE BEE.

(From "Quentin Metsys," extracted from "Anglo-Belgic Ballads," 1854, a unique volume of "humorous poetry"; the author spent much time in Antwerp. The following lines are from the story of how the famous Flemish artist, "Metsys," won for his wife the daughter of the painter, Flore.)

IT chanced the painter had gone out one day;
Metsys in stealth came his respects to pay:

.

He spied Flore's painting: Saint Michael in the sky,
Hurling the rebel angels from on high;
Who, falling headlong into pits below,
Assumed the quaintest features as they go.
Some looked like dragons clad in scaly mail,
With wings extended flutt'ring on the gale;
Etna-mouthed devils, with amazing tails,
To thresh great sinners—like to rustic flails,
A boar's head one—a most amazing pig,
With sturdy tusks, and eke a flowing wig;
And next a lion-man: you could not need a
More wild, fantastic, strange *olla-podrida*.
Saint Michael's broad sword flared up in the middle,
While angel bands scraped tunes upon the fiddle.
These rebel angels would indeed have made
Fit subjects for *Mons*: Jullien's masquerade.

Now, having fed his gaze, smith Metsys took
The brush and palette. With a master's look,
Upon a devil's thigh he quickly drew
A humming bee; then down the brushes threw.
To his dear mistress now he quickly flies;
She the sweet insect in an instant spies.
She screams—is fearful lest the bee will sting.
"Poh, poh!" cries Metsys; "'tis no living thing;
But hush—your father comes. Behind this screen
Let's hie, and watch him, where we are unseen."

Flore slowly entered : but, with startled look,
He saw the bee, and then a duster took.
“ *Dunder and Blixem!* ” cried the good old man ;
To puff and blow the artist next began.
“ Saint Luke, have mercy ! Well, I do declare
This bee’s as obstinate as any bear.”
Puff—puff! “ The insect sticks like cobbler’s wax.
Will nothing make the thing its hold relax ?
She’ll spoil my devil with her waxen thigh ;
I’ll gently touch her—she might sting !—my eye !
I’ll ope the casement, and entice her out—
I’ll pluck a rose—Franz, mind what you’re about !
How very odd, it moves not leg nor wing !
Can this be fancy ? ’Tis a living thing !
Saint Luke ! No—yes—no—aha, I see,
Some cunning rascal has bamboozled me :
’Tis painted ! He, I swear, who drew this bee,
Shall have my daughter. I’m in ecstasy ! ”

“ ’Twas I ! ” cried Metsys. — “ You, smith Metsys,
you ! ”—

“ I was a *smith*, but now a painter true,
Who claims your daughter, and her dowry too ! ”
“ She’s yours,” cried Franz. “ Love’s labour is not lost,
If she repay the trouble she has cost ! ”

CHARLES F. ELLERMAN

THE LION OF FLANDERS.

FROM "PHILIP VAN ARTEVELDE."

THE little bird sat on the greenwood tree,
And the sun was as bright as bright could be ;
The leaf was broad, the shade was deep,
The Lion of Flanders lay fast asleep.

The little bird sang : " Sir Lion, arise !
For I hear with my ears and I see with my eyes,
And I know what I know, and I tell thee this,
That the men of Ghent have done something amiss."

From his lair the Lion of Flanders rose,
And he shook his mane and toss'd up his nose ;
" Ere a leaf be fallen or summer be spent,"
Quoth he, " If God spare me, I'll go to Ghent.

" For a little bird sang, and I dream'd beside,
That the people of Ghent were puff'd up with pride,
And I had been far over hill and dale
And was fast asleep, and they trod on my tail."

Ere a leaf was fallen the Lion he went,
And growl'd a growl at the gates of Ghent ;
But they bended low when they saw him awake,
And said that they trod on his tail by mistake.

The little bird sat on the bush so bare,
And the leaf fell brown on the Lion's lair ;
The little bird pick'd a berry so red,
And dropt it down on the Lion's head.

" Sir Lion, awake ! and put out your claws,
And lift your chin from your tawny paws ;
My ears are smaller than yours, but more
I hear than you, and worse than before."

The Lion stirred and awoke with a snort,
And swell'd with rage till his breath came short ;
“ Ere the brown leaf meet with the flake of snow
On the roundabout stair, to Ghent I'll go.

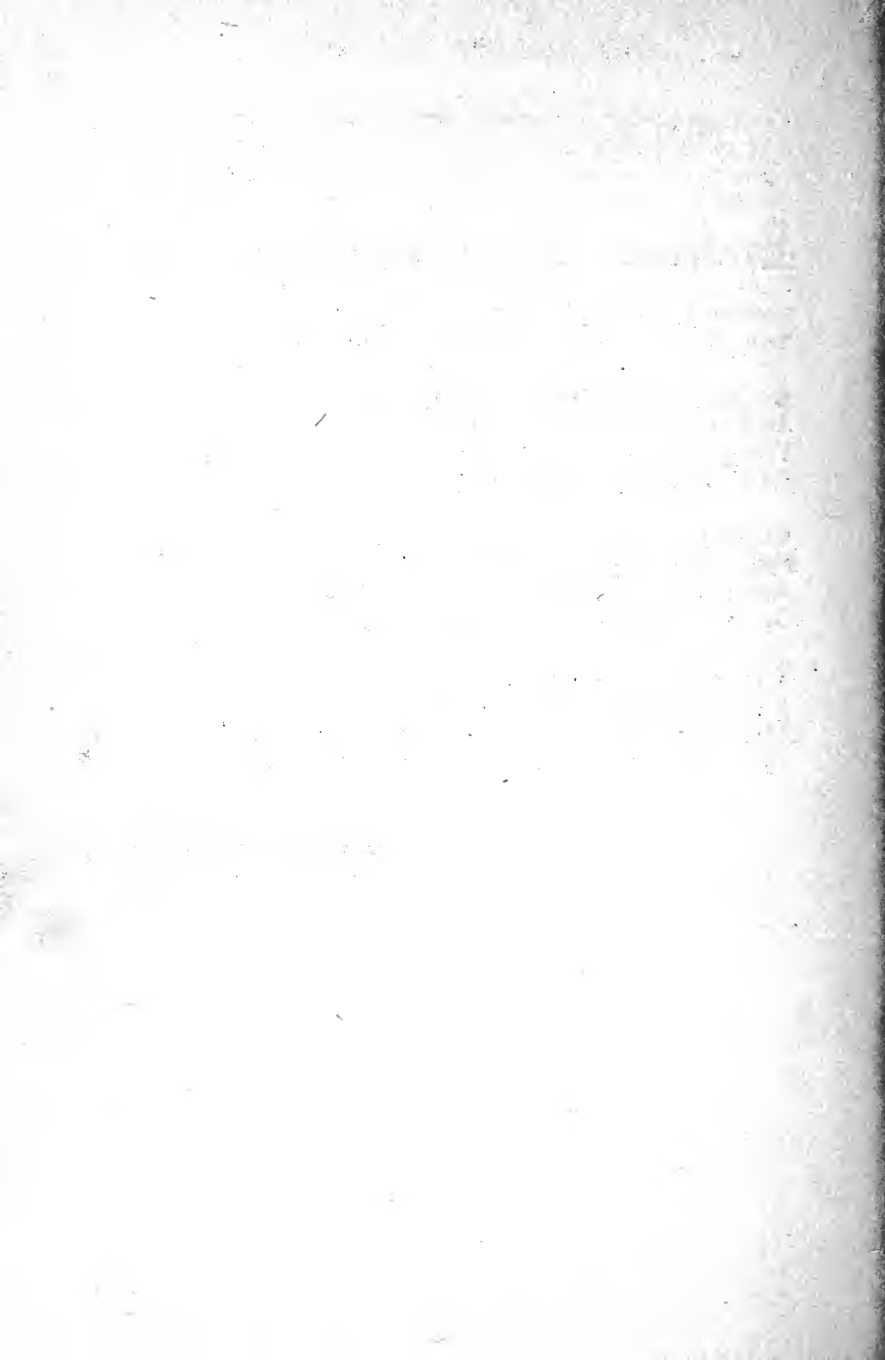
“ For a little bird sang, and I dream'd as well,
That the people of Ghent were as false as hell ;
Coming by stealth when nought I fear'd,
They trod on my corns and pull'd my beard.”

Ere a snow-flake fell the Lion he went,
And roar'd a roar at the gates of Ghent ;
The gates they shook though they were fast barr'd,
And the warders heard it at Oudenarde.

At the first roar, ten thousand men
Fell sick to death—he roar'd again,
And the blood of twenty thousand flow'd
On the bridge of Roone, as broad as the road.

Woe worth thee, Ghent ! if, having heard
The first and second, thou bidest the third ;
Flat stones and awry, grass, potsherd and shard,
Thy place shall be like an old churchyard.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR



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